

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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THE MOONSTONE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c. &c.

SECOND PERIOD. THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH. (1848—1849.)

THIRD NARRATIVE.

THE NARRATIVE OF FRANKLIN BLAKE.

CHAPTER II.

"BETTEREDGE!" I said, pointing to the well-remembered book on his knee, "has Robinson Crusoe informed you, this evening, that you might expect to see Franklin Blake?"

"By the lord Harry, Mr. Franklin!" cried the old man, "that's exactly what Robinson Crusoe has done!"

He struggled to his feet with my assistance, and stood for a moment, looking backwards and forwards between Robinson Crusoe and me, apparently at a loss to discover which of us had surprised him most. The verdict ended in favour of the book. Holding it open before him in both hands, he surveyed the wonderful volume with a stare of unutterable anticipation—as if he expected to see Robinson Crusoe himself walk out of the pages, and favour us with a personal interview.

"Here's the bit, Mr. Franklin!" he said, as soon as he had recovered the use of his speech. "As I live by bread, sir, here's the bit I was reading, the moment before you came in! Page one hundred and fifty-six as follows:—'I stood like one Thunder-struck, or as if I had seen an Apparition.' If that isn't as much as to say: 'Expect the sudden appearance of Mr. Franklin Blake'—there's no meaning in the English language!" said Betteredge, closing the book with a bang, and getting one of his hands free at last to take the hand which I offered him.

I had expected him, naturally enough under the circumstances, to overwhelm me with questions. But no—the hospitable impulse was the uppermost impulse in the old servant's mind, when a member of the family appeared (no matter how!) as a visitor at the house.

"Walk in, Mr. Franklin," he said, opening the door behind him, with his quaint old-fashioned bow. "I'll ask what brings you here afterwards—I must make you comfortable first. There have been sad changes, since you went away. The house is shut up, and the servants

are gone. Never mind that! I'll cook your dinner; and the gardener's wife will make your bed—and if there's a bottle of our famous Latour claret left in the cellar, down your throat, Mr. Franklin, that bottle shall go. I bid you welcome, sir! I bid you heartily welcome!" said the poor old fellow, fighting manfully against the gloom of the deserted house, and receiving me with the sociable and courteous attention of the bygone time.

It vexed me to disappoint him. But the house was Rachel's house, now. Could I eat in it, or sleep in it, after what had happened in London? The commonest sense of self-respect forbade me—properly forbade me—to cross the threshold.

I took Betteredge by the arm, and led him out into the garden. There was no help for it. I was obliged to tell him the truth. Between his attachment to Rachel, and his attachment to me, he was sorely puzzled and distressed at the turn that things had taken. His opinion, when he expressed it, was given in his usual downright manner, and was agreeably redolent of the most positive philosophy I know—the philosophy of the Betteredge school.

"Miss Rachel has her faults—I've never denied it," he began. "And riding the high horse, now and then, is one of them. She has been trying to ride over *you*—and you have put up with it. Lord, Mr. Franklin, don't you know women by this time better than that? You have heard me talk of the late Mrs. Betteredge?"

I had heard him talk of the late Mrs. Betteredge pretty often—invariably producing her as his one undeniable example of the inbred frailty and perversity of the other sex. In that capacity he exhibited her now.

"Very well, Mr. Franklin. Now listen to me. Different women have different ways of riding the high horse. The late Mrs. Betteredge took her exercise on that favourite female animal whenever I happened to deny her anything that she had set her heart on. So sure as I came home from my work on these occasions, so sure was my wife to call to me up the kitchen stairs, and to say that, after my brutal treatment of her, she hadn't the heart to cook me my dinner. I put up with it for some time—just as you are putting up with it now from Miss Rachel. At last my patience wore out. I went down-stairs, and I took Mrs. Betteredge—affectionately, you

understand—up in my arms, and carried her, holus-bolus, into the best parlour, where she received her company. I said, 'That's the right place for you, my dear,' and so went back to the kitchen. I locked myself in, and took off my coat, and turned up my shirt-sleeves, and cooked my own dinner. When it was done, I served it up in my best manner, and enjoyed it most heartily. I had my pipe and my drop of grog afterwards; and then I cleared the table, and washed the crockery, and cleaned the knives and forks, and put the things away, and swept up the hearth. When things were as bright and clean again, as bright and clean could be, I opened the door, and let Mrs. Betteredge in. 'I've had my dinner, my dear,' I said; 'and I hope you will find I have left the kitchen all that your fondest wishes can desire.' For the rest of that woman's life, Mr. Franklin, I never had to cook my dinner again! Moral: You have put up with Miss Rachel in London; don't put up with her in Yorkshire. Come back to the house."

Quite unanswerable! I could only assure my good friend that even *his* powers of persuasion were, in this case, thrown away on me.

"It's a lovely evening," I said. "I shall walk to Frizinghall, and stay at the hotel, and you must come to-morrow morning and breakfast with me. I have something to say to you."

Betteredge shook his head gravely.

"I'm heartily sorry for this," he said. "I had hoped, Mr. Franklin, to hear that things were all smooth and pleasant again between you and Miss Rachel. If you must have your own way, sir," he continued, after a moment's reflection, "there is no need to go to Frizinghall to-night for a bed. It's to be had nearer than that. There's Hotherstone's Farm, barely two miles from here. You can hardly object to *that* on Miss Rachel's account," the old man added slyly. "Hotherstone lives, Mr. Franklin, on his own freehold."

I remembered the place the moment Betteredge mentioned it. The farm-house stood in a sheltered inland valley, on the banks of the prettiest stream in that part of Yorkshire; and the farmer had a spare bedroom and parlour, which he was accustomed to let to artists, anglers, and tourists in general. A more agreeable place of abode, during my stay in the neighbourhood, I could not have wished to find.

"Are the rooms to let?" I inquired.

"Mrs. Hotherstone herself, sir, asked for my good word to recommend the rooms, yesterday."

"I'll take them, Betteredge, with the greatest pleasure."

We went back to the yard, in which I had left my travelling bag. After putting a stick through the handle, and swinging the bag over his shoulder, Betteredge appeared to relapse into the bewilderment which my sudden appearance had caused, when I surprised him in the beehive chair. He looked incredulously at the house, and then he wheeled about, and looked more incredulously still at me.

"I've lived a goodish long time in the world," said this best and dearest of all old servants

—"but the like of this, I never did expect to see. There stands the house, and here stands Mr. Franklin Blake—and, Damme, if one of them isn't turning his back on the other, and going to sleep in a lodging!"

He led the way out, wagging his head and growling ominously. "There's only one more miracle that *can* happen," he said to me, over his shoulder. "The next thing you'll do, Mr. Franklin, will be to pay me back that seven-and-sixpence you borrowed of me when you were a boy."

This stroke of sarcasm put him in a better humour with himself and with me. We left the house, and passed through the lodge gates. Once clear of the grounds, the duties of hospitality (in Betteredge's code of morals) ceased, and the privileges of curiosity began.

He dropped back, so as to let me get on a level with him. "Fine evening for a walk, Mr. Franklin," he said, as if we had just accidentally encountered each other at that moment. "Supposing you had gone to the hotel at Frizinghall, sir?"

"Yes?"

"I should have had the honour of breakfasting with you, to-morrow morning."

"Come and breakfast with me at Hotherstone's Farm, instead."

"Much obliged to you for your kindness, Mr. Franklin. But it wasn't exactly breakfast that I was driving at. I think you mentioned that you had something to say to me? If it's no secret, sir," said Betteredge, suddenly abandoning the crooked way, and taking the straight one, "I'm burning to know what's brought you down here, if you please, in this sudden way."

"What brought me here before?" I asked.

"The Moonstone, Mr. Franklin. But what brings you now, sir?"

"The Moonstone again, Betteredge."

The old man suddenly stood still, and looked at me in the grey twilight as if he suspected his own ears of deceiving him.

"If that's a joke, sir," he said, "I'm afraid I'm getting a little dull in my old age. I don't take it."

"It's no joke," I answered. "I have come here to take up the inquiry which was dropped when I left England. I have come here to do, what nobody has done yet—to find out who took the Diamond."

"Let the Diamond be, Mr. Franklin! Take my advice, and let the Diamond be! That cursed Indian jewel has misguided everybody who has come near it. Don't waste your money and your temper—in the fine spring-time of your life, sir—by meddling with the Moonstone. How can *you* hope to succeed (saving your presence), when Sergeant Cuff himself made a mess of it? Sergeant Cuff!" repeated Betteredge, shaking his forefinger at me sternly. "The greatest policeman in England!"

"My mind is made up, my old friend. Even Sergeant Cuff doesn't daunt me.—By-the-bye, I may want to speak to him, sooner or later. Have you heard anything of him lately?"

"The Sergeant won't help you, Mr. Franklin."

"Why not?"

"There has been an event, sir, in the police-circles, since you went away. The great Cuff has retired from business. He has got a little cottage at Dorking; and he's up to his eyes in the growing of roses. I have it in his own handwriting, Mr. Franklin. He has grown the white moss rose, without budding it on the dog-rose first. And Mr. Begbie the gardener is to go to Dorking, and own that the Sergeant has beaten him at last."

"It doesn't much matter," I said. "I must do without Sergeant Cuff's help. And I must trust to you, at starting."

It is likely enough that I spoke rather carelessly. At any rate, Betteredge seemed to be piqued by something in the reply which I had just made to him. "You might trust to worse than me, Mr. Franklin—I can tell you that," he said a little sharply.

The tone in which he retorted, and a certain disturbance, after he had spoken, which I detected in his manner, suggested to me that he was possessed of some information which he hesitated to communicate.

"I expect you to help me," I said, "in picking up the fragments of evidence which Sergeant Cuff has left behind him. I know you can do that. Can you do no more?"

"What more can you expect from me, sir?" asked Betteredge, with an appearance of the utmost humility.

"I expect more—from what you said just now."

"Mere boasting, Mr. Franklin," returned the old man obstinately. "Some people are born boasters, and they never get over it to their dying day. I'm one of them."

There was only one way to take with him. I appealed to his interest in Rachel, and his interest in me.

"Betteredge, would you be glad to hear that Rachel and I were good friends again?"

"I have served your family, sir, to mighty little purpose, if you doubt it!"

"Do you remember how Rachel treated me, before I left England?"

"As well as if it was yesterday! My lady herself wrote you a letter about it; and you were so good as to show the letter to me. It said that Miss Rachel was mortally offended with you, for the part you had taken in trying to recover her jewel. And neither my lady, nor you, nor anybody else could guess why."

"Quite true, Betteredge! And I come back from my travels, and find her mortally offended with me still. I knew that the Diamond was at the bottom of it, last year; and I know that the Diamond is at the bottom of it now. I have tried to speak to her, and she won't see me. I have tried to write to her, and she won't answer me. How, in Heaven's name, am I to clear the matter up? The chance of searching into the loss of the Moonstone, is the one chance of inquiry that Rachel herself has left me!"

Those words evidently put the case before

him, as he had not seen it yet. He asked a question which satisfied me that I had shaken him.

"There is no ill-feeling in this, Mr. Franklin, on your side—is there?"

"There was some anger," I answered, "when I left London. But that is all worn out now. I want to make Rachel come to an understanding with me—and I want nothing more."

"You don't feel any fear, sir—supposing you make any discoveries—in regard to what you may find out about Miss Rachel?"

I understood the jealous belief in his young mistress which prompted those words.

"I am as certain of her as you are," I answered. "The fullest disclosure of her secret will reveal nothing that can alter her place in your estimation, or in mine."

Betteredge's last-left scruples vanished at that.

"If I am doing wrong to help you, Mr. Franklin," he exclaimed, "all I can say is—I am as innocent of seeing it as the babe unborn! I can put you on the road to discovery, if you can only go on by yourself. You remember that poor girl of ours—Rosanna Spearman?"

"Of course!"

"You always thought she had some sort of confession, in regard to this matter of the Moonstone, which she wanted to make to you?"

"I certainly couldn't account for her strange conduct in any other way."

"You may set that doubt at rest, Mr. Franklin, whenever you please."

It was my turn to come to a standstill now. I tried vainly, in the gathering darkness, to see his face. In the surprise of the moment, I asked a little impatiently what he meant.

"Steady, sir!" proceeded Betteredge. "I mean what I say. Rosanna Spearman left a sealed letter behind her—a letter addressed to you."

"Where is it?"

"In the possession of a friend of her's, at Cobb's Hole. You must have heard tell, when you were here last, sir, of Limping Lucy—a lame girl, with a crutch."

"The fisherman's daughter?"

"The same, Mr. Franklin."

"Why wasn't the letter forwarded to me?"

"Limping Lucy has a will of her own, sir. She wouldn't give it into any hands but yours. And you had left England before I could write to you."

"Let's go back, Betteredge, and get it at once!"

"Too late, sir, to-night. They're great savers of candles along our coast; and they go to bed early at Cobb's Hole."

"Nonsense! We might get there in half an hour."

"You might, sir. And when you did get there, you would find the door locked." He pointed to a light, glimmering below us; and, at the same moment, I heard through the stillness of the evening the bubbling of a stream.

"There's the Farm, Mr. Franklin! Make yourself comfortable for to-night, and come to me to-morrow morning—if you'll be so kind?"

"You will go with me to the fisherman's cottage?"

"Yes, sir."

"Early?"

"As early, Mr. Franklin, as you like."

We descended the path that led to the Farm.

CHAPTER III.

I HAVE only the most indistinct recollection of what happened at Hotherstone's Farm.

I remember a hearty welcome; a prodigious supper, which would have fed a whole village in the East; a delightfully clean bedroom, with nothing in it to regret but that detestable product of the folly of our forefathers—a feather bed; a restless night, with much kindling of matches, and many lightings of one little candle; and an immense sensation of relief when the sun rose, and there was a prospect of getting up.

It had been arranged over-night with Betteredge, that I was to call for him, on our way to Cobb's Hole, as early as I liked—which, interpreted by my impatience to get possession of the letter, meant as early as I could. Without waiting for breakfast at the Farm, I took a crust of bread in my hand, and set forth, in some doubt whether I should not surprise the excellent Betteredge in his bed. To my great relief he proved to be quite as excited about the coming event as I was. I found him ready, and waiting for me, with his stick in his hand.

"How are you this morning, Betteredge?"

"Very poorly, sir."

"Sorry to hear it. What do you complain of?"

"I complain of a new disease, Mr. Franklin, of my own inventing. I don't want to alarm you, but you're certain to catch it before the morning is out."

"The devil I am!"

"Do you feel an uncomfortable heat at the pit of your stomach, sir? and a nasty thumping at the top of your head? Ah! not yet? It will lay hold of you at Cobb's Hole, Mr. Franklin. I call it the detective-fever; and I first caught it in the company of Sergeant Cuff."

"Aye! aye! and the cure in this instance is to open Rosanna Spearman's letter, I suppose? Come along, and let's get it."

Early as it was, we found the fisherman's wife astir in her kitchen. On my presentation by Betteredge, good Mrs. Yolland performed a social ceremony, strictly reserved (as I afterwards learnt) for strangers of distinction. She put a bottle of Dutch gin and a couple of clean pipes on the table, and opened the conversation by saying, "What news from London, sir?"

Before I could find an answer to this immensely comprehensive question, an apparition advanced towards me, out of a dark corner of the kitchen. A wan, wild, haggard girl, with remarkably beautiful hair, and with a fierce keenness in her eyes, came limping up on a crutch to the table at which I was sitting,

and looked at me as if I was an object of mingled interest and horror, which it quite fascinated her to see.

"Mr. Betteredge," she said, without taking her eyes off me, "mention his name again, if you please."

"This gentleman's name," answered Betteredge (with a strong emphasis on *gentleman*), "is Mr. Franklin Blake."

The girl turned her back on me, and suddenly left the room. Good Mrs. Yolland—as I believe—made some apologies for her daughter's odd behaviour, and Betteredge (probably) translated them into polite English. I speak of this in complete uncertainty. My attention was absorbed in following the sound of the girl's crutch. Thump-thump, up the wooden stairs; thump-thump across the room above our heads; thump-thump down the stairs again—and there stood the apparition at the open door, with a letter in its hand, beckoning me out!

I left more apologies in course of delivery behind me, and followed this strange creature—limping on before me, faster and faster—down the slope of the beach. She led me behind some boats, out of sight and hearing of the few people in the fishing-village, and then stopped, and faced me for the first time.

"Stand there," she said. "I want to look at you."

There was no mistaking the expression on her face. I inspired her with the strongest emotions of abhorrence and disgust. Let me not be vain enough to say that no woman had ever looked at me in this manner before. I will only venture on the more modest assertion that no woman had ever let me perceive it yet. There is a limit to the length of the inspection which a man can endure, under certain circumstances. I attempted to direct Limping Lucy's attention to some less revolting object than my face.

"I think you have got a letter to give me," I began. "Is it the letter there, in your hand?"

"Say that again," was the only answer I received.

I repeated the words, like a good child learning its lesson.

"No," said the girl, speaking to herself, but keeping her eyes still mercilessly fixed on me. "I can't find out what she saw in his face. I can't guess what she heard in his voice." She suddenly looked away from me, and rested her head wearily on the top of her crutch. "Oh, my poor dear!" she said, in the first soft tones which had fallen from her, in my hearing. "Oh, my lost darling! what could you see in this man?" She lifted her head again fiercely, and looked at me once more. "Can you eat and drink?" she asked.

I did my best to preserve my gravity, and answered, "Yes."

"Can you sleep?"

"Yes."

"When you see a poor girl in service, do you feel no remorse?"

"Certainly not. Why should I?"

She abruptly thrust the letter (as the phrase is) into my face.

"Take it!" she exclaimed furiously. "I never set eyes on you before. God Almighty forbid I should ever set eyes on you again."

With those parting words, she limped away from me at the top of her speed. The one interpretation that I could put on her conduct has, no doubt, been anticipated by everybody. I could only suppose that she was mad.

Having reached that inevitable conclusion, I turned to the more interesting object of investigation which was presented to me by Rosanna Spearman's letter. The address was written as follows:—"For Franklin Blake, Esq. To be given into his own hands (and not to be trusted to anyone else), by Lucy Yolland."

I broke the seal. The envelope contained a letter: and this, in its turn, contained a slip of paper. I read the letter first:—

"Sir,—If you are curious to know the meaning of my behaviour to you, while you were staying in the house of my mistress, Lady Verinder, do what you are told to do in the memorandum enclosed with this—and do it without any person being present to overlook you. Your humble servant,

"ROSANNA SPEARMAN."

I turned to the slip of paper next. Here is the literal copy of it, word for word:

"Memorandum:—To go to the Shivering Sand at the turn of the tide. To walk out on the South Spit, until I get the South Spit Beacon, and the flagstaff at the Coast-guard station above Cobb's Hole in a line together. To lay down on the rocks, a stick, or any straight thing to guide my hand, exactly in the line of the beacon and the flagstaff. To take care, in doing this, that one end of the stick shall be at the edge of the rocks, on the side of them which overlooks the quicksand. To feel along the stick, among the seaweed (beginning from the end of the stick which points towards the beacon), for the Chain. To run my hand along the Chain, when found, until I come to the part of it which stretches over the edge of the rocks, down into the quicksand. *And then, to pull the chain.*"

Just as I had read the last words—underlined in the original—I heard the voice of Betteredge behind me. The inventor of the defective-fever had completely succumbed to that irresistible malady. "I can't stand it any longer, Mr. Franklin. What does her letter say? For mercy's sake, sir, tell us, what does her letter say?"

I handed him the letter, and the memorandum. He read the first without appearing to be much interested in it. But the second—the memorandum—produced a strong impression on him.

"The Sergeant said it!" cried Betteredge. "From first to last, sir, the Sergeant said she had got a memorandum of the hiding-place.

And here it is! Lord save us, Mr. Franklin, here is the secret that puzzled everybody, from the great Cuff downwards, ready and waiting, as one may say, to show itself to *you*! It's the ebb now, sir, as anybody may see for themselves. How long will it be till the turn of the tide?" He looked up, and observed a lad at work, at some little distance from us, mending a net. "Tammie Bright!" he shouted, at the top of his voice.

"I hear you!" Tammie shouted back.

"When's the turn of the tide?"

"In an hour's time."

We both looked at our watches.

"We can go round by the coast, Mr. Franklin," said Betteredge; "and get to the quicksand in that way, with plenty of time to spare. What do you say, sir?"

"Come along."

On our way to the Shivering Sand, I applied to Betteredge to revive my memory of events (as affecting Rosanna Spearman) at the period of Sergeant Cuff's inquiry. With my old friend's help, I soon had the succession of circumstances clearly registered again in my mind. Rosanna's journey to Frizinghall, when the whole household believed her to be ill in her own room—Rosanna's mysterious employment of the night-time, with her door locked, and her candle burning till the morning—Rosanna's suspicious purchase of the japanned tin case, and the two dogs' chains from Mrs. Yolland—the Sergeant's positive conviction that Rosanna had hidden something at the Shivering Sand, and the Sergeant's absolute ignorance as to what that something could be—all these strange results of the abortive inquiry into the loss of the Moonstone, were clearly present to me again, when we reached the quicksand, and walked out together on the low ledge of rocks called the South Spit.

With Betteredge's help, I soon stood in the right position to see the Beacon and the Coast-guard flagstaff in a line together. Following the memorandum as our guide, we next laid my stick in the necessary direction, as neatly as we could, on the uneven surface of the rocks. And then we looked at our watches once more.

It wanted nearly twenty minutes yet of the turn of the tide. I suggested waiting through this interval on the beach, instead of on the wet and slippery surface of the rocks. Having reached the dry sand, I prepared to sit down; and, greatly to my surprise, Betteredge prepared to leave me.

"What are you going away for?" I asked.

"Look at the letter again, sir, and you will see."

A glance at the letter reminded me that I was charged, when I made my discovery, to make it alone.

"It's hard enough for me to leave you, at such a time as this," said Betteredge. "But she died a dreadful death, poor soul—and I feel a kind of call on me, Mr. Franklin, to humour that fancy of her's. Besides," he added, con-

fidentially, "there's nothing in the letter against your letting out the secret afterwards. I'll hang about in the fir plantation, and wait till you pick me up. Don't be longer than you can help, sir. The detective-fever isn't an easy disease to deal with, under *these* circumstances."

With that parting caution, he left me.

The interval of expectation, short as it was when reckoned by the measure of time, assumed formidable proportions when reckoned by the measure of suspense. This was one of the occasions on which the invaluable habit of smoking becomes especially precious and consolatory. I lit a cigar, and sat down on the slope of the beach.

The sunlight poured its unclouded beauty on every object that I could see. The exquisite freshness of the air made the mere act of living and breathing a luxury. Even the lonely little bay welcomed the morning with a show of cheerfulness; and the bared wet surface of the quicksand itself, glittering with a golden brightness, hid the horror of its false brown face under a passing smile. It was the finest day I had seen since my return to England.

The turn of the tide came, before my cigar was finished. I saw the preliminary heaving of the Sand, and then the awful shiver that crept over its surface—as if some spirit of terror lived and moved and shuddered in the fathomless deeps beneath. I threw away my cigar, and went back again to the rocks.

My directions in the memorandum instructed me to feel along the line traced by the stick, beginning with the end which was nearest to the beacon.

I advanced, in this manner, more than half way along the stick, without encountering anything but the edges of the rocks. An inch or two further on, however, my patience was rewarded. In a narrow little fissure, just within reach of my forefinger, I felt the chain. Attempting, next, to follow it, by touch, in the direction of the quicksand, I found my progress stopped by a thick growth of seaweed—which had fastened itself into the fissure, no doubt, in the time that had elapsed since Rosanna Spearman had chosen her hiding-place.

It was equally impossible to pull up the seaweed, or to force my hand through it. After marking the spot indicated by the end of the stick which was placed nearest to the quicksand, I determined to pursue the search for the chain on a plan of my own. My idea was to "sound" immediately under the rocks, on the chance of recovering the lost trace of the chain at the point at which it entered the sand. I took up the stick, and knelt down on the northern brink of the South Spit.

In this position, my face was within a few feet of the surface of the quicksand. The sight of it so near me, still disturbed at intervals by its hideous shivering fit, shook my nerves for the moment. A horrible fancy that the dead woman might appear on the scene of her suicide, to assist my search—an unutterable dread of seeing her rise through the heaving surface of

the sand, and point to the place—forced itself into my mind, and turned me cold in the warm sunlight. I own I closed my eyes at the moment when the point of the stick first entered the quicksand.

The instant afterwards, before the stick could have been submerged more than a few inches, I was free from the hold of my own superstitious terror, and was throbbing with excitement from head to foot. Sounding blindfold, at my first attempt—at that first attempt I had sounded right! The stick struck the chain.

Taking a firm hold of the roots of the seaweed with my left hand, I laid myself down over the brink, and felt with my right hand under the overhanging edges of the rock. My right hand found the chain.

I drew it up without the slightest difficulty. And there was the japanned tin case fastened to the end of it.

The action of the water had so rusted the chain, that it was impossible for me to unfasten it from the hasp which attached it to the case. Putting the case between my knees, and exerting my utmost strength, I contrived to draw off the cover. Some white substance filled the whole interior when I looked in. I put in my hand, and found it to be linen.

In drawing out the linen, I also drew out a letter crumpled up with it. After looking at the direction, and discovering that it bore my name, I put the letter in my pocket, and completely removed the linen. It came out in a thick roll, moulded, of course, to the shape of the case in which it had been so long confined, and perfectly preserved from any injury by the sea.

I carried the linen to the dry sand of the beach, and there unrolled and smoothed it out. There was no mistaking it as an article of dress. It was a nightgown.

The uppermost side, when I spread it out, presented to view innumerable folds and creases, and nothing more. I tried the undermost side, next—and instantly discovered the smear of the paint from the door of Rachel's boudoir!

My eyes remained rivetted on the stain, and my mind took me back at a leap from present to past. The very words of Sergeant Cuff recurred to me, as if the man himself was at my side again, pointing to the unanswerable inference which he drew from the smear on the door.

"Find out whether there is any article of dress in this house with the stain of the paint on it. Find out who that dress belongs to. Find out how the person can account for having been in the room, and smeared the paint, between midnight and three in the morning. If the person can't satisfy you, you haven't far to look for the hand that took the Diamond."

One after another those words travelled over my memory, repeating themselves again and again with a wearisome, mechanical reiteration. I was roused from what felt like a trance of many hours—from what was really, no doubt, the pause of a few moments only—by a voice

calling to me. I looked up, and saw that Betteredge's patience had failed him at last. He was just visible between the sand hills, returning to the beach.

The old man's appearance recalled me, the moment I perceived it, to my sense of present things, and reminded me that the inquiry which I had pursued thus far still remained incomplete. I had discovered the smear on the nightgown. To whom did the nightgown belong?

My first impulse was to consult the letter in my pocket—the letter which I had found in the case.

As I raised my hand to take it out, I remembered that there was a shorter way to discovery than this. The nightgown itself would reveal the truth; for, in all probability, the nightgown was marked with its owner's name.

I took it up from the sand, and looked for the mark.

I found the mark, and read—

MY OWN NAME.

There were the familiar letters which told me that the nightgown was mine. I looked up from them. There was the sun; there were the glittering waters of the bay; there was old Betteredge, advancing nearer and nearer to me. I looked back again at the letters. My own name. Plainly confronting me—my own name.

"If time, pains and money can do it, I will lay my hand on the thief who took the Moonstone."—I had left London, with those words on my lips. I had penetrated the secret which the quicksand had kept from every other living creature. And, on the unanswerable evidence of the paint-stain, I had discovered Myself as the Thief.

NOTHING LIKE EXAMPLE.

THERE is to be found in many of what we call the low parts of London, and in the back regions of higher neighbourhoods as well, a shop, established for the sale of cheap periodicals and newspapers, bottles of ink, pencils, bill-files, account books, skeins of twine, little boxes of hard water colours, cards with very sharp steel pens and a holder sown to them, Pickwick cigars, peg-tops, and ginger-beer. Cheap literature is the staple commodity; and it is a question whether any printed sheet costing more than a penny ever passes through the hands of the owner of one of these temples of literature.

One of the leading features in these second-rate newsvenders' windows—perhaps the leading feature, and certainly the object to which it is the special desire of the present writer to draw attention—is always a great broadsheet of huge coarsely executed woodcuts, representing, in a style of art the badness of which has never been surpassed at any period of our uncivilisation, every kind of violent and murderous act, every foul and diabolical crime,

every incident marked by special characteristics of noisomeness, horror, or cruelty, which the annals of the week preceding the publication-day of this grievous sheet have furnished for the benefit of the morbidly disposed part of the British public. Only the worst crimes are commemorated here. Has some wretched child been tormented with rare ingenuity by an unnatural parent; has some miserable woman been assaulted with more than common ferocity by her husband; has a father been murdered by his son, or a son by his father; has an ardent lover blown out his sweetheart's brains, or his own, or both his sweetheart's and his own; here, as surely as the Saturday comes round, we have thrust before our eyes, certain great woodcut illustrations of such horrors, the original ghastliness of the subjects being supplemented by the additional grimness which the vilest and rudest execution can impart. In a word, if, in the course of the week you have happened to glance at some newspaper paragraph, describing a state of things so shocking that you have instinctively left it unread—an account of some miserable creature left for years in an underground cellar to perish through neglect and starvation—the details of some unnatural piece of cruelty from which you have turned away as a thing by occupying yourself with which you could do no possible good to yourself or any one else—be sure that as certainly as the end of the week comes round, you will find all the details of the horror which you have shrunk from examining, exhibited before you in the window of the cheap newsvender.

While the smaller criminal incidents of the week are thus illustrated, the greater events, the crimes célèbres, are not forgotten. These are always commemorated on a larger scale than the less remarkable acts of atrocity. The greater the crime, the larger the woodcut. This seems to be the simple rule of the artist who furnishes these illustrations. It is not uncommon, in the cases of very distinguished criminals indeed, to follow out the story of his crime from beginning to end; showing him first in the act of committing the murder, then in the condemned cell taking leave of his friends, then on his way to the scaffold or in the pinioning-room, and lastly actually on the scaffold with the noose suspended over his head.

I have before me, at this moment, two of these sheets—rival competitors for public favour—on each of which are represented scenes of the kind just described. They exhibit the final passages in the life of Miles Wetherill, the Todmorden murderer. On one of these broadsheets, is an immense woodcut, with figures eight or nine inches high, illustrating the leave-taking between the culprit and his sweetheart; on the other, is an engraving of the same size giving the public the benefit of the actual scene which took place on the scaffold on the occasion of the execution of this wretched creature and of another more obscure criminal named Faherty. An odious picture this, in which the principal personage is shown standing with bared neck,

and pinioned arms, under the beam, waiting until the hangman is ready to attend to him—the executioner being engaged at the moment in pulling a white nightcap over the face of the less important malefactor. Nothing can exceed the brutality of this picture. The hangman is adjusting the cap with the air of a sculptor administering the final touches to a favourite work, and the head and face indicated within the cap are blank and shapeless as a pudding ready for boiling.

In both of these illustrations there is strong suggestion of a tendency, conscious or unconscious, on the part of the designer to impart something of the aspect of a hero, or a martyr, to the figure of his principal performer. He is smartly dressed, with neat boots and symmetrical trousers. His hair is parted carefully in the middle, and there is an indescribable air about him of knowing that he is famous, and enjoying the consciousness of fame.

There is no want of variety in these works of art. In one respect, it is true, they are alike—they deal always in horrors. But the horrors are various. Here is a huge design showing the assassination of the Deputy-Lieutenant of Westmeath, on the same page with a smaller cartoon representing the ruinous results of a race between a couple of costermongers' donkeys, and a third in which one of the costermongers, who has managed to kill a gentleman's horse with the shaft of his barrow, is captured by a particularly able-bodied woman, who holds him down on the ground until the tardy policeman arrives on the scene. A man holding a child by the waistband, over the mouth of a well into which he is about to drop it, is shown on another of the broadsheets, side by side with a most horrible representation of a pauper, with a long beard, chopping at his own throat with a huge dinner-knife. The pauper is described in the literary notice which accompanies the woodcut as *holding aside his beard* while in the act of cutting his throat; and the gusto with which the artist has laid hold of this incident is very marked.

So choice a bit of squalor as that furnished by the discovery of the body of the escaped lunatic at Hackney-wick is not forgotten by the artist who has this weekly sheet of horrors to supply. He makes a great effort to be terrible in dealing with this subject. His figures are larger than ever, in the design which illustrates the descriptive notice. He treats the public to some wonderful exhibition of expression in the faces of the discoverers of the body, and is altogether unsparring of printer's ink in developing the dark recesses of his background and the gloomy interior of the cupboard. Still, for some reason or other, he does not succeed in impressing us. Perhaps this is because in trying to force the expression of his discovering workman, he has insanely planted five exceedingly jocose crow's-foot wrinkles at the corner of his right eye—perhaps because his man in the cupboard is not in the least dead; indeed his attitude would be incompatible, not only

with death, but even, while the laws of gravitation exist, with genuine sleep. It is curious to observe how utterly devoid of even this kind of power—as of all other power—are these woodcuts, one and all. There is not the slightest token of the commonest and most widely diffused power of observing, on the part of the artist. In the case just quoted, the head of the dead man in the cupboard, is inclined at an angle so slight that its sustenance in its position necessarily implies the use of muscular power. And just in the same way there is in one of the marginal illustrations, on the same page, a representation of an accident at sea, in which two men are shown clinging to the keel of a boat, with hair, which, instead of being matted close to the head by the action of the water, is dressed in barber's-block fashion, and perfectly crisp and curly. In small things as well as large, it seems to be only the great artist who will take the trouble to think what he is about.

But it is not in a critical examination of these precious works of art that we are now engaged. It is the moral rather than the technical result achieved by the artist with which we have to do. What is their effect on the group of men and boys, who always congregate round a fresh sheet as soon as it makes its appearance in the shop-window of the small news-vender? This is the really grave question. That audience of men and boys is never wanting. They stand in little knots gazing at the shocking reproductions of shocking scenes, with every manifestation of profound interest, if not of extreme enjoyment. They seem to gloat over these horrors, and always to enjoy the worst and most violent atrocities the most keenly; and especially is this so with the younger amateurs. They will compare notes one with another on the merits of the art treasures thus liberally exhibited to them free of charge. They make an excellent audience. No especially malignant bludgeon stroke, no exceptionally wide-gaping wound, no more than commonly generous flow of the vital fluid—and the wounds gape very wide, and the vital fluid flows very freely in most of these pictures—is lost upon them. On the contrary, all these delicate touches find in this special public to which they appeal, a keen and sympathising appreciation. Nor, to judge by appearances, is the infliction of the punishment awarded to crime, less attractive as a subject for art illustration to these morbidly disposed youngsters than the commission of the crime itself. The prison scenes, and especially those which represent the transactions which immediately precede the last scene of all, are invariably popular; while as to that really last scene, with its prurient display of nooses, and night-caps, and the other horrible paraphernalia of the scaffold, it is always regarded as a thing of beauty beyond the rest, and a joy—if not for ever, at least for a considerable part of the current week.

It is impossible for any thoughtful man to come upon one of these little groups, and not

to ask himself whether the habitual contemplation of such representations is a good and wholesome thing for any human being under the sun. Before those who stand thus and absorb with their eyes, are displayed a succession of transactions, in which the desire of vengeance, the lust of plunder, the gratification of ferocity or cruelty, appears as the instigating motive of all sorts of enormities. Blows, stabbings, shootings, violent acts of every kind, are made familiar to all who choose to look, by these prints. Is it good for men—still more is it good for boys—to be familiarised with these things? We do not say that a man or boy will, after scrutinising one of these representations of active crime simply go and do likewise, because of what he has seen; but we do say that when the time of temptation comes his nature will be all the less ready to resist, because of the habitual familiarity with violence. The members of that particular section of society in which the admirers of the illustrations are chiefly to be found, see quite enough of the administration of blows and kicks, and of all varieties of cruel acts in their own domestic circles. If father is drunk or angry and mother comes in his way, what does he have recourse to?—Blows. If mother is in wrath or in liquor and the children come in her way, what does she have recourse to?—Blows. A lad brought up in this school gets imbued with its principles quite soon enough under the best circumstances. He becomes quite disposed enough to take it for granted that the infliction of violence by the strong on the weak is the first law of nature. And now he goes to the news shop round the corner, and finds that the same rule obtains elsewhere and that blows and violence are the order of the day, in other places besides his own home, and the homes—to call them so—of nearly all his neighbours. Everywhere blows, everywhere violence. Everywhere tyranny of strong over weak. Why not on his imitative part, as on the part of so many others?

These grim representations of cruel and savage deeds spread out before his eyes, and appealing thus, by the strongest appeal of all, to his understanding—such as it is—tend, plainly, to the utter, utter debasing and degrading of his nature, and tend likewise to a horrible imitation of a long series of horrible examples.

We have confined ourselves hitherto to the illustrations by which the first page of this most objectionable sheet, which is larger than the Times, is entirely filled up. We have dealt with these first, because they appear—speaking a language which all can understand, and which, with the class especially addressed, is more powerful than any collection of words that could be put together—to be more dangerous, and calculated to do more harm, than the literary portion of the work. Still the last must not be lost sight of. The illustrations may be enjoyed free of expense, by those who choose to study them in the shop windows; not so the

letter-press. This the public must pay for, and, as it does pay for it, it is logical to conclude that the public likes it. Let us examine for a moment what the public does like.

It likes—else why should it pay money to get them?—detailed accounts of all sorts of ugly and terrible transactions. It likes graphic descriptions, with particulars, of human remains discovered under mysterious circumstances and in an advanced state of decomposition. It likes—judging by the titles of the different articles—to read of Brutal Assaults, of Fearful Murder and Suicide by a Father, of Attempted Wife Murder at Bury, of a Frightful Case of Suicide at the Bristol Union, of a Charge of Murder against the Servant of a Duke, of a Dreadful Assault with a Bar of Red-hot Iron.

It likes the stimulating headings—the composition of which is an art studied very carefully by the compilers of this journal—prefixed to every article. There is a good store of them: Struggle upon a Housetop; Desertion and Theft; Threatening the Life of a Tradesman; Stabbing a Witness; Cruelty to a Horse; Cruelty to Fowls; Charge of Maliciously Scalding a Child; Recognition of a Photograph by a Dog; How Illegitimate Children are disposed of; Suicide through Profligacy and Remorse; Five Colliers Buried Alive; Mutilation Extraordinary—Two Men Robbed of their Noses! These are but a few of such titles, and a great number might easily be quoted, suggestive of the same kind of cheerful and profitable reading. It is a curious circumstance, by the way, that when any of the accidents and offences concern any person connected with the public-house trade, this fact is always specially indicated in the title. Thus we read of the Shocking Suicide of a Barmaid, of A Dishonest Potman, of An Assault on a Licensed Victualler, or of some one Annoying the Wife of a Licensed Victualler, as of special and unheard-of wonders.

The audience addressed, in addition to its predilection for horrors, has also a taste—less powerfully developed, but still a taste—for matter of a lighter nature, as a sort of seasoning: just as the public at our transpontine theatres appreciate a farce or a burlesque after a raw-head and bloody-bones melodrama. This audience likes a police case headed, Helping Himself to a Slice of Beef, or A Woman Charged with Attacking the Military. Something of satire, too, is not unpalatable—Parochial Humanity, or The Law of Moving-on; nor is an occasional Joe Miller regarded as objectionable, or even a sentiment, if couched in such flowery language as the following: "A smile is ever the most bright and beautiful with a tear upon (!) it. What is the dawn without its dew?"

But what this particular public seems to like best of all, is a detailed history of the last hours of some well-known malefactor—a kind of murderers' Court Circular. Such a history is furnished of the final scenes in the life of Miles Wetherill.

The narrative is subdivided into sections, each with a heading or title of a stimulating character. CONDUCT OF THE CULPRITS SINCE THEIR SENTENCE OF DEATH.—WETHERILL'S INTERVIEW WITH HIS RELATIVES AND SWEET-HEART.—WETHERILL'S LAST LETTER TO A FRIEND.—TIMOTHY FAHERTY.—THE GALLOWES AND BARRICADES.—THE CROWD.—THE CULPRITS.—THE PINIONING.—THE OFFICIAL PROCESSION TO THE SCAFFOLD.—LAST PREPARATION OF ALL.—CALCRAFT THREATENED.

The subject indicated under each of these headings receives careful and loving treatment, the details being (to employ an expressive phrase much in use among French artists) "caressed" with affection. The description of the machinery of punishment is executed with an especial relish. "The gallows," says our author, "is a black cross-beam, with black drapery shrouding the drop almost up to the criminal's head—all as like as possible to that which was erected in November—most likely the very same framework put together again, resting as usual on the east wall of the prison in New Bailey-street. The usual gap was made in the top of the wall, and the bricks, scarcely set in the mortar in which they were laid after the execution of Allen, Larkin, and Gould, were easily dislodged."

Before arriving at the pinioning scene inside the jail—a part of the horrible performance which seems always in these cases to be described with particular zest—there is something to be said about the gathering outside the prison. "Perhaps, however, the most remarkable feature in the crowd was the great number of women. At neither of the two previous executions in Manchester did women form so large a proportion of those who came first so as to make sure of good places. . . . With daylight the gallows and the crowd at the foot of it stood confessed. Never was a more motley gathering; not even the red coats of the soldiers were wanting to complete the variety. Every shade of the Lancashire dialect appeared to be represented. The sleeper still slept, the blasphemer still swore, and the shivering young women still divided the shelter of their shawls."

At last we get to "the pinioning:" a scene which gives an opportunity for a little of that hero-worship which the true penny-a-liner almost always indulges in when describing the last hours of a malefactor. We get to the hangman too now, and have occasion to mention him by name more than once: which seems in these cases always to afford infinite satisfaction both to writer and reader. "While the crowd were making merry outside," says the report, "the last preparations were being made within the prison for carrying out the dread sentence of the law. Shortly before eight o'clock the condemned men were taken from their cells to the pinioning room, and their arms and hands were then bound in the usual manner by Calcrafft. During this operation Wetherill's fortitude never forsook him; he even manifested a sort

of cheerfulness, and conversed with the chaplain and Mr. Wright without the least tremor or hesitation. Faherty, on the appearance of Calcrafft, gave way for a moment to the deepest dejection. From this state, however, he soon rallied. . . . Almost immediately, as the clock struck eight, the door opening from the prison on the scaffold was thrown back upon its hinges, and Faherty came to the front with a firm and unflinching step. He was dressed in deep mourning, which contrasted strongly with the ghastly paleness overspreading his features. Turning his gaze from the crowd he looked upward, and his lips moved. The white cap was then drawn over his face and the rope adjusted in the ordinary manner. . . . All eyes were directed to Wetherill, but he stood within three steps of the drop firm and undaunted. One of the warders held him by the arm, but the convict shook him off and said, 'You need not hold me, I can stand by myself.' The cap was adjusted within a minute or two, and the hangman having shaken both by the hand, withdrew the bolt—"

Now who can be the better for all this? Who can be the better for discovering that by committing a great crime a man instantly starts into celebrity, becomes the observed of all observers, has his doings described, his sayings recorded, his bearing, looks, and manner, made the subject of careful investigation and comment?

Is any one deterred from the commission of a misdeed by reading in nauseous and minute detail that some one else has been similarly guilty? Is any one kept from blood-guiltiness, by reading those morbid scaffold chronicles? The influence of such reading is, as events have proved, exactly the other way. We are imitative creatures, and the influence of bad example is notoriously great in the criminal world. Any offence of an exceptional kind, and distinguished by exceptional characteristics, is sure to be followed by another, and another, wonderfully like the first in all respects. Great crimes, such as that of Rush, of Townley, of Wetherill, become a kind of precedent of iniquity. The wretched demoniacally vain jackass (for vanity is at the bottom of all these misdeeds) who has had a row with his sweetheart, says: "I'll serve her as Townley did his sweetheart," and straightway blows her brains out or cuts her throat. The area sneak, who objects to the nature of his reception at the house where his young woman resides, and where no followers are allowed, determines in like manner, as he broods over his wrongs, "he'll do for them people as Miles Wetherill did for them Plows at Todmorden." He adds, moreover, that "he doesn't care if he swings for it," and, to do him justice, when the time comes for swinging, it seems as if this boast were well founded, and he really does not care very much after all. Is he sustained by the thought that his picture will appear in the next number of the Police News, with the

hangman attending to him on one side, and the clergyman in his surplice attending to him on the other?

A LAKE OF PITCH.

THE great sight of the West Indies, is the Pitch Lake of Trinidad. I therefore, a British traveller, put myself on board the William Burnley, perhaps the smallest steamboat that ever crossed the Atlantic. This adventurous vessel now plies a lucrative trade in the Gulf of Paria, between the port of Spain and the other towns and settlements on the West Coast of Trinidad. And it had the goodness to put me down at La Brea, where passengers for the Pitch Lake are landed.

The reef that formerly enclosed the little harbour has been all exported, for pitch, by an enterprising foreigner; but the boat grounds on pitch—you step ashore on a pitch wharf—pitch is stored on it—you see pitch everywhere—the air is full of pitch—the conversation is all on the price of pitch. A more dreary looking place I have never seen, and as a residence it is even worse than it looks. The few Europeans who live here, or who visit the place frequently, suffer acutely from fever and ague, and the remainder of the population, the modern Piceni—although they seem to have wonderfully adapted their colour, like trout in a stream—to the locality in which they live yet are unable to acclimatise themselves to the fatal atmosphere.

Declining the honour of a seat in a country cart drawn by bullocks, which was going up to the Lake, we started on foot, as we had not to walk more than a mile from the shore. The first part of the road had unfortunately just been "improved" by the Warden; that is, a ditch had been dug on either side—a desirable thing in itself—and the mud, lumps of pitch and turf, had all been thrown into the middle of the road. Luckily, the Warden's energy or his money had not enabled him to carry his improvements far, and we soon came to the track in its original state: a very fair road of natural asphalt, pleasant to walk on, hard and springy. Leaving behind us the few scattered hovels that constitute the village (wretched in themselves, but surrounded by beautiful flowers and splendid pine-apples, for which La Brea is famous), we came out on a most desolate tract, whence the wood had been cleared for timber or by fire, and where many experiments in pitch digging had been made. One's impression naturally is, that where pitch enters so very largely into the composition of the soil, an accidental fire in the woods would soon become inextinguishable and convert the whole district into "Phlegmæan Plains," but fortunately the pitch on the surface does not burn.

As the road gradually ascended, it was curious to see how the overlapping layers of pitch assumed a curve, bulging down hill, re-

minding one somewhat of lava currents, or of Professor Forbes's ingenious experiment for illustrating his theory of the semi-viscous nature of glaciers. Half a mile more brought us to the lake itself. At the first view the whole lie of it is exactly like that of any other small lake in a forest, and one does not notice that it is filled with pitch instead of water. There are the swampy-looking tufts of rushes and rough grass on the margin, the forest ends in a clearly marked line all round, and several islands covered with trees and bushes are dotted over the surface of the lake. The momentary illusion is quickly dispelled by the colour and solid appearance of the flood. The pitch is, throughout nearly the whole surface, hard enough to walk over with perfect safety. It has a peculiarly clean look, and my first impression was that the top had just been removed from the part we first walked over, and that then it had been swept with a very hard broom, or scraped when rather soft, there being the same sort of marks on it that are left by a birch broom on a very soft gravel path. The whole lake is intersected by cracks, or rather valleys, in which the exudations, apparently from different centres, have not quite met. These vary in depth and width, from a few inches to many feet, and at the time of my visit were full of water. In one of the larger I saw a very ugly bull-headed fish, weighing about a quarter of a pound—I presume a "warm-water fish;" but it is surprising that any fish could exist in water so warm and so impregnated with sulphur and other matters.

We began to cross these cracks on the back of a very tall nigger, but as this involved some delay as well as the risk of disappearing with the nigger under the water, should he make a false step, or slip at the critical moment, a long plank was substituted, by the help of which we reached the other side of the lake, tolerably dry, and struck into the forest by a sort of corduroy road. Here are what are called "pitch volcanoes"—small mounds not more than two feet usually, above the level, in the centre a hole about eight inches in diameter. In some of the holes the pitch, which seemed perfectly liquid, was some few feet below the surface; in others it was near the brim, and in others it was oozing over. I could not ascertain that the volcanoes ever showed any greater activity. The first part of the road lay through a grove of palm-trees of great beauty and variety—chiefly the fan-palm and Maximiliana insignia—these were succeeded by a dense forest of fine trees. A sharp turn in the path unexpectedly showed that we were again close to the sea, though some fifty feet above the shore, and disclosed one of the most charming views, on a small scale, that I ever saw: the rippling sea dotted with small rocky islets, each capped with foliage; steep red cliffs to the left, overhung with creepers; all around us the tropical forest with its wonderful forms, its marvellous flowers, its profusion of ferns, and the splendid butterflies

that "waver, lightly settle, and sleepily swing."

There were drawbacks, however, to the enjoyment of such a scene. I was stepping into the wood, to catch a glimpse of an unknown butterfly that had just settled, when the manager warned me that the place was notorious for its snakes, and showed me a specimen of a very venomous one killed that morning. This may be called a national drawback. An artificial drawback is the fact that this most charming bay has been selected as a likely location for an oil well, and the then result showed the shrewdness of the manager's calculations, for the borings had "struck ile" in two places. Only those who have seen it and smelt it can fully understand the filth and stench of an oil well. A few whiffs of the fetid fluid as it came up the pipe, and a very cursory inspection of the works, satisfied our curiosity about this tropical Petrolia, and, with one more look at the charming nook as we re-entered the forest path, out of sight and smell of the works, we returned to the lake; in the centre of which, some men had been left to dig pitch from two feet at least below the surface. Hitherto the pitch that has been exported has proved a failure for gas purposes; but it had been suggested that this might not be the case if it were taken from some depth under the surface, where it had not been exposed to the action of air and water. A spot was selected where the pitch seemed pure and clean. It was very hard, on and below the surface, and though a large piece would have a certain amount of toughness and elasticity, like partially hardened blue clay, yet it chipped and flew at every stroke of the pick. I noticed that, even on the hardest parts, the ferrule of my umbrella gradually sank down, if pressed upon; and I was assured that in forty-eight hours the large hole that had now been dug would be completely filled up again. A few yards distant from where we stood, the surface was quite soft; too soft to walk swiftly over: and I could not but shudder at the thought of the possibility of being embalmed alive, in pitch. This soft part was usually of a lighter brown colour, nearly as fluid as treacle. Owing, I presume, to the quantity of water with it, we took some up in our hands and were not "defiled," except by a slight smell remaining on the fingers. In this softer part, there were constant small discharges of gas, fetid sighs emitted from the bubbling mass, with small squirts of water and beautifully coloured bubbles. This was the only part of the lake where anything like action seemed to be going on.

The niggers shouldered the barrels of pitch (one of them soon went headlong, barrel and all, into one of the cracks), and carried them off to the cart on the side of the lake. We started on a shorter line for the bank; but we had not gone many steps before the thunder-storm which had long been threatening, burst over us in all its fury. No one who has not experienced the power of a storm in the Tropics, at

the beginning of the rainy season, can fully appreciate our situation on the exposed surface of the lake. The immediate effect was to convert the whole of the lake, the cracks having been previously full of water, into a hissing sea of bubbles; and they, with the splash of the huge rain-drops, made it impossible to see whether the water was deep or shallow. Our plank and our tall nigger were not then at our disposition, and being without even a stick, our only means of testing the depth was by the booted legs of one of the party. As long as the water was not much above his knees, we followed him; but that quarter of a mile occupying a long half hour, was very tedious and unpleasant before we were once more on comparatively dry land. The road back to the village was converted into a dirty whirling torrent, carrying down on its surface a brown dusty substance that seemed not to mix with the water. This was bad enough, but it was pleasant walking compared to the Warden's "improvements;" through which, we eventually dragged ourselves, to await the return of the steamer.

LEAVES FROM THE MAHOGANY-TREE.

SALAD-MAKING.

THE salad is the one of the few links that still binds us to the golden age, and those long-since vanished days of peace, innocence, and no taxes.

To a quiet observer of an epicurean turn of mind nothing can be more agreeable than from the quiet red-curtained bin of a London tavern to look forth upon the humours of man, whose noblest prerogative it is to be denominated "a cooking animal." The lion is generous as a hero, the rat artful as a lawyer, the dove gentle as a lover; the beaver is a good engineer, the monkey a clever actor—but none of them can make a soup, or put together an omelette. The wisest sheep never thought of culling and contrasting his grasses, seasoning them with thyme and tarragon, softening them with oil, exasperating them with mustard, sharpening them with vinegar, spiritualising them with a suspicion of onions; in a word, sheep have existed for thousands of years, yet no ovine genius has yet arisen to suggest and carry out the construction of a *salad*. Our woolly friends still eat their grass pure and simple; as they did on the plains of Mamre and at the foot of Ararat, they do now on the Tartar steppes and at the base of the great Chinese pagodas, and the only condiment their uninitiated appetites need is what the Spaniards call the

"Salsa de San Bernardo"

("St. Bernard's sauce"),

which, being interpreted, means simply, "Hunger and a good appetite," which sauce was always much affected by your hermit, and it is to your thoughtful and wise hermit that we, no doubt, owe that divine simplicity—the salad.

It is a treat to lurk in a snug corner,

say, at the Cock Tavern, that old hostelry mentioned by Pepys, and from which the landlord fled for a time during the Great Plague, and there, under covert of the brown shadow of the comfortable old carved baked mantelpiece, to watch a hungry, but luxurious Queen's Counsel call for his salad, while the cloven kidney, the brown juicy chop, or the slightly crimsoned steak (delicious yet barbaric), are patiently enduring their martyrdom upon the adjacent gridiron that St. Lawrence for ever consecrated.

Presently (culled from we know not what Hesperian Gardens, near Battersea) comes the bowl of green leafage, cool and pleasant to look on as the days grow warmer. The Q.C., weary of arid parchment and tape the colour of men's heart strings, smiles blandly as it appears, for the calenture of London is upon him, and he would fain babble of green fields and budding hedges, such as those which hid his first bird's nest, and the pallid waiter smiles too, for the lettuces are green and dewy, and it freshens even a parboiled man to look on them. I, in ambush behind my dull red curtain, watch the loving way with which the Q.C. lifts out the first crumply lettuce. The moist gardens of Fulham never produced a better. But to hide his self complacency, he asks the waiter snappishly if they haven't any more oil in the house, holds up reproachfully the almost empty cruet glass, and with the air of an alchemist letteth the last teaspoonful of golden fluid trickle lazily down towards the broken stopper. He then shaketh angrily the vinegar, as if irritated at its being full and furnishing no subject for complaint, and then sniffeth at it as if it were smelling salts, and long fasting had made him faint. This for the outer vulgar; but with inward calm the Q.C. proceeds with his agreeable and appetising task, on the great Göthe principle, "never hurrying, never resting." A gentle Pharisaism is diffusing itself through his mind. Really too lazy and hungry to go so far as his West-end club, he is persuading himself that he is saving money and dining quite as pleasantly Eastward. As he sprinkles the floor with the second half of the wet lettuce he secretly repeats a quotation from Doctor William King's pleasant poem, *The Art of Cookery*:

Happy the man that has rich Fortune tried,
To whom she much has given, much denied;
With abstinence all delicates he sees,
And can regale himself on toast and cheese.

Nevertheless, philosopher as our Q.C. is, I feel no doubt he will sum up with a pint of Mr. Tennyson's old port, and will then walk on to his club to compare it with the Pall Mall vintage of the "comet year."

The floor as well sprinkled with the lettuce as a cathedral pavement with a priest's aspersoir, our Q.C., with a cunning look, doth next dive his hand into the blue willow-pattern bowl and sorts his vegetables. With what smiling search he forages out the little shining

bald onions, whose dainty white roots are small as threads of cotton; with what triumph he draws forth the little white frills of the bleached endive. How disapprovingly and sternly he notices the absence of that French luxury, the little leaflet of innocuous tarragon. How in almost a judicial way he severs the young cucumber, and lets fall its transparent sections into the magic caldron. With a light hand he tosses in the tiny growth of mustard and cress (hot and cool so pleasantly allied), and now his fingers advance towards the cruet standing there patiently with its company of ministering bottles; but first he cracks, unshells, and severs the egg, forgetful of the fowl it might have been, and scoops out with dainty care the hard ball of yellow flour. With what a loving firmness, crushing the globe with the bowl of a teaspoon, he liquefies it into a delicious sauce!

"Remember, Q.C.," I long to cry, thrusting my head in an exhorting way, between the dusty red curtains, "remember the fine old proverb:

"A good salad requires a spendthrift to put in the oil, a miser to pour the vinegar, a wise man to add the mustard, and a madman to stir it all up."

But the Q.C. has not forgotten those pleasant little dinners he used to have at that restaurant in the Rue Vivienne, at that cool first-floor window that commanded a view of the jeweller's shop,

"La Reine Topaze,"

and of the quiet though lively street below, upon whose pavement the fitful lamplight ever fell so softly. He has not forgotten the precepts of that eminent *viveur*, the German professor, who preached so largely and frequently upon the salad, and allowed no profane hands to touch the component parts but his own. With what exquisite and learned unction the worthy Dr. Dreikopf used to first poise and ring with a snap of his finger the china bowl before he began, as the juggler does the plate he is about to send spinning through the air. He used to scrutinise the vessel as a pagan priest would have done, with holy awe, a vessel prepared for a sacrifice. Next, taking a young onion, he perfumed it with a light and playful touch. Next with a wise chemistry he prepared a large silver tablespoon, and filled it four times with the finest oil of Lucca—pure, sweet and golden as ever green Italian olive berry yielded. Four times the oil to one of vinegar, that was Herr Professor's great and primary maxim. "Want of oil," using a rather scattered metaphor, "was," he said, "the great rock on which English salad makers always split." That golden sea was the ocean to which all other liquids and solids were to be mere subsidiaries—one brimming spoonful of brown vinegar the Professor (our Q.C. distinctly remembers) next, with exulting generosity, proud as a witch of her second spell, dashed into the enchanted caldron. The mustard he then added, by instinct, to infuse a flavour and a kindly warmth into the acute vinegar and the lubricating and emollient oil. Then and there

he also threw in a pinch of sacred salt, that sanatory crystalline dust which the Italian physicians think essential to the wholesomeness of this bouquet of raw vegetables. Their aliterative proverb is

"Salata insalata no è sanata," (a salad unsalted is not salubrious).

The Professor seldom failed, indeed, to quote this saying, and also a pleasant companion to it, which asserts that "after salad should come wine;" not that the Professor wanted any strange lore as excuse for a potation, and it was always observed that the more potatoes he took the more languages he talked, till at last, on the giddy verge of a classical and polyglottic inebriety, he became a Tower of Babel in himself, and noisy as a cargo of monkeys in a gale of wind.

And here, leaving the Professor at his salad bowl, let us consider that great man's theory that salads were invented by Adam and Eve. "Your Milton," he used to observe, his spectacles glittering as he spoke, "makes Adam and Eve eat nectarines, and then dip out the water from the brook in their dark crimson skins." Better have eaten a salad in that hot weather when the "fervid sun" shot down more warmth than Adam needed. Let us see, he would remark, if salads were invented in Eden. The poet says:

And Eve within due at her hour [punctual, you see
—that is the very starting point of a good
cook] prepared

For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst,
Of nectarous draught between, from milky stream
[give me pure water]—
Berry or grape.

In another place Adam refers to drying fruit (hence the incomparable Biffin); and Eve brings for the dinner given to Raphael,

Fruit of all kinds in coat—
Rough or smooth-rined, or bearded husk or shell—
For drink the grape.
She crushes inoffensive must and meaths;
From many a berry, and from sweet kernels pressed
She tempers dulcet creams.

"Clearly," the Professor went on, "your English Milton was wrong in forgetting to introduce the salad—for in Eden it was probably made of pomegranates, as it is still in Spain—and among the green lettuces Eve no doubt prettily sprinkled a scatter of rose-leaves. Ohne zweifel!" the professor would say—"ohne zweifel!" and then he would dash at the salad mixture like a Bedlamite at the full of the moon.

Now, I do enjoy seeing a man have a good "browse" of green-meat—a real hearty Nebuchadnezzar meal. It is good for us carnivorous animals to go out occasionally to grass. Such also were the opinions of the worthy professor of Jena, and the Q.C. smiles as he recalls them to mind, and memory's prism casts a flickering rainbow of poetry over even the humble salad.

How is it that, wandering from my friend the Q.C., concocting his salad at the Cock, I

got into the first floor of a restaurant in the Rue Vivienne, and there, in company with a German professor, somewhat of the pedant, I began another bowl of salad, and have left that also unfinished? What matter how it is? Even an ox will shift his ground when he has set his mind on browsing.

Yet once more behold me in ambuscade behind the red curtains of the last bin but one on the left-hand side of the Cock, watching the Q.C. prepare his salad mixture at that open table just northward of the fireplace. He has rinsed the lettuces like one does a hat that's got wet; he has culled and arranged his "vegetable store," as Goldsmith hath it; he has perfumed the salad bowl, and prepared the sauce. He now takes an onion forth, and, by cross cuts, reduces a small bar of it to the finest conceivable dice (no Florentine mosaicist ever reduced his lapis lazuli to such small dice), and these, half timidly, half proudly, he scatters into the thick, turbid, yellow fluid. Next he snatches up his knife and fork, and gashes the lettuces and endive, and soaks the small undergrowth of mustard and cress. He then slashes into the soft green leaves with all the fervour of a young haymaker, a woodman working by contract, a forager afraid of surprise, and an Indian grass-cutter anxious about tigers or on the edge of a snaky jungle. Even the French horsemen with the "long sword, saddle, bridle," never slashed up the gay Mamelukes of Mourad Bey half as fast in those green lentil fields at the foot of the Pyramids. A moment ago the lettuces were distinct plants, green-yellow umbrellas without handles and with white milky stumps for ferrules; now they are mere green square segments glistening with oil and brown with vinegar. There is a batful of them to browse upon.

The Q.C. smiles, and only wishes the German professor could be witness of his present skill and dexterity. He is an apt pupil of Epicurus, and all this time his appetite is whetting at the sight of the slowly-preparing dish. The salad is all but ready: now, calling for another bowl, the Q.C., with the deftness of an Indian juggler, claps the empty bowl on the top of the full one, which he has first stirred with an "energy divine," and reverses the contents of the full one into the empty, so that the oil and vinegar descend in a heavy soaking rain through the pile of green leafage; the salad is at last ready—"a dish for the gods."

At this moment in comes the chop, of a delicious brown; the gravy moistening its comely plump cheek, settling here and there in the dimples in little warm savoury pools, highly appetising. Edward, the waiter, bruising the leathery jacket of the potato dexterously in his napkin, tumbles out the hot flour. A moment after he appears with a pot of silvery-pewter full of frothy stout. Kings, kaisers, princes, can all your ragouts and fricandeaus match a homely meal like this? Alderman of the fattest, your calipash is trash compared to this.

A solitary club dinner is pleasant when you

are in a contemplative mood, or want to observe the humours of your neighbours. It is amusing to see old Major Crabtree write on the back of his bill his indignation at the soapy potatoes, for the seventeenth time soapy; or that enormous eater Doctor Dodson, crown his cyclopean meal by piles of pancakes and a bottle of heavy port. But one soon exhausts the humours of a club; a tavern presents a larger and more varying flood of character. Another charm about the solitary tavern dinner, such as the Q.C. is now enjoying, is that it excites to pleasant contemplation. One cannot think when busy talking, and thinking excites digestion and quickens the gastric juice. Solitude and society are both good in their way; but after the work of the morning a tired man is sometimes glad to ruminate alone. It is only the fanatic in business, or the mad hunter after money who stand at a buffet, like horses at a manger, gobble up their quantum, and madly plunge again into business, to the total destruction of their digestive powers, and to the loss, perhaps for ever, of all spiritual enjoyment in a good dinner.

The Q.C. eats his salad in the French way, alone, and as he gazes his thoughts revert pleasantly to old days in Paris with the salad-making Professor, long since laid at rest in Père la Chaise under shelter of Balzac's tomb, on that rising ground where there is such a fine view of Paris and the little blue dome of the Invalides shows through the clear sapphirine air of the smokeless and beautiful city. He thinks of old student days, of a certain pretty rosy brown face that used to haunt him from an opposite attic window, of long walks to Fontainebleau, of the table-d'hôte at Meurice's, where he first met the lady who is now his wife, of the lowering day there before the revolution that drove out Charles the Tenth, with its rumble of artillery and sound of distant firing. Then suddenly breaking from this land of memory he calls Edward, and says sternly:

"Bring me a pint of *the port*, mind it is *the port*, and, Edward, some cheese."

The special charm of a salad, the poetry of it, in fact, is on a hot day in summer, when the London pavement is hot enough to cook a chop; when the paint on the shop doors is blistering, and policemen's brains are grilling like toast cheese inside their helmets; when cabmen, very choleric and short in temper, keep taking blue handkerchiefs out of their hats and dashing them in again as if they were trying to knock out the crows, and street apple women fall asleep totally heedless of custom or urchin thieves; when shop boys drip patterns on the pavement with their water cans, and splash any person they can safely; when Clapham omnibus drivers are thirstier than usual, and drain off stout faster than their smoking horses suck up the pailsfull of water held up to them by the ostlers at the half-way house; when in the West-end squares pleasant music oozes from open windows and venetian blinds; when Covent Garden is one vast flower-

bed, and smells like Bucklersbury at "simple time;" when dirty looking men, either burglars tired of the night's prowling, or idle mechanics, go to sleep face downwards in the parks, and give them the appearance of battle-fields, and the Achilles, though not over-clothed, is so hot that he'd scorch you if you touched him—then, I say, it is a pleasure to retire into some old-fashioned tavern—the Mitre, where Doctor Johnson planned with Boswell his venturous trip to the Hebrides; or the Cheshire Cheese, which Goldsmith used to frequent—go and refresh your body with a steak, and your eyes with a salad. As you stir up that moist foliage, the fatigue, and dust, and heat, and stuffiness of London pass from you, and there arise thoughts of

Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provencal song, and sun-burnt mirth,
and of

Grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild,
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine,
Fast-fading violets covered up in leaves.

At such times I fancy myself again in my own country garden, beating the dark earth from the fibrous root of the portly lettuces, whose large hearts have almost burst the bass zones that bind them, drawing carefully my pink radishes, or lifting out tenderly the young onions with heads scarcely bigger than bodkins; if I divest myself of culinary thoughts, I imagine myself lazily lying on my back, buried in flowering grass, just ripe for the scythe, watching a foot above me an orange-shelled ladybird climbing a grass stalk, or some little blue butterflies flickering round a honey-sweet clover-flower.

The old French proverb-maker, who said,

Qui vin ne boit après salade
Est en danger d'être malade,

had many other wise saws relating to food, of more or less value, such as,

Old fish, old oil, and old friends are best.

Veal, fowls, and fish fill the churchyards.

Take the middle of wine, the top of oil, and the bottom of honey.

After pears wine or the priest.

After melon wine is a felon.

You must drink as much after an egg as after an ox.

Of all salads lobster salad is the most picturesque. The red-skinned flesh of the creature contrasts exquisitely (was surely intended to contrast exquisitely) with the tender April green of the virgin lettuce. To parody Brillat-Savarin, may I not say, Powerful kings, invincible paladins, friends of Nero and Helio-gabalus, how I pity you, for you did not know the lobster salad! The very scarlet of the lobster-shell gives one an appetite. With what a keen pleasure one cleaves the crimson plate-armour of the sea monster through, with one steady, strong pressure from head to heel; from his little black prominent beads of eyes to the last brown filament of his fan-like tail. Easily as an almond from its soft shell,

gently as a coin from a mould, comes the plastic flesh. We toss it into the bed of lettuce leaves, and prepare for the sauce. We make it like Mrs. Rundall, but with this difference, that we put more oil and less vinegar, and we do not forget essence of anchovy, mushroom ketchup, hard-boiled eggs, or a little mollifying cream, that lubricates everything like good-nature does life.

Mashed potato, rubbed down with cream, mustard, and salt, is no bad substitute for egg, and imparts to a salad a new and not unpleasant flavour. Tomatoes—those warm orange-globed tropical "pommes d'amour"—are excellent too in a salad. Their rich-flavoured pulp and skin, warm as capsicums, are incomparable, if well spread and diffused on a proper friendly footing with the other ingredients. French beans, too, the most delicate of vegetables, make a salad of great merit. You must boil the beans as usual for the table, then mix a dressing in the following proportions:

Four mustard ladles of mustard,
Four salt ladles of salt,
Three dessert-spoonfuls of essence of anchovy
Four ditto of mushroom ketchup,
Three ditto of the best Italian oil,
Twelve ditto of vinegar,
Three unboiled eggs.

The Spanish use pomegranates in their salads. For myself I dislike that fruit, with the shell like baked clay. The Arab poets may compare the lips of those they love to the rosy, fleshy pips of the pomegranate, but to my mind the acid is of an uninteresting, insipid, and rather disagreeable character. Perhaps they are grateful to men choked with the dusty heat of a Spanish summer; but when one can pick from the green parent tree an orange just yellowing, who would eat the poor watery fruit of Granada? Still, to the epicure, eager for novelty, the thing is worth a trial—at the worst it is only a bowl of salad to be thrown away; for depend upon it servants won't eat what their masters dislike.

In the time of the Regency an old French emigré of taste and refinement, an epicurean marquis, who had, perhaps, often supped at the Petit Trianon, with the thoughtless, laughing ladies of poor Marie Antoinette, or revelled with Egalité in the Palais Royal, on dishes rarer and stranger than even nightingale's brains, or stewed canaries—attended parties at the West-end as a preparer of salads. He carried with him a mahogany case full of sauces and essences, and the result was (well only a Spaniard could express it by joining the tips of his five joined fingers and then blowing them apart with a kiss)—

"Whew! Perfection!"

The old emigré made a fortune, and returned with the Bourbons to regenerate the French with a new salad mixture. *Ventre de St. Gris!* that man would have deserved a London statue as much as the Duke of York or Jenner, had he only left us his recipe.

If tradition be correct, the *Roi de la salade*

constructed his finest work somewhat on these lines:

He chopped up three anchovies with a little shallot and some parsley; these he threw into a bowl, with a little mustard and salt, two table-spoonfuls of oil, and one brimming over of vinegar; when madly mixed he added to these extremely thin short slices of Westphalia ham, or the finest roast beef, which he first steeped in the seasoning. He then covered the bowl, and in three hours the salad was fit for table. He garnished with parsley and a few wafers of bacon. Perfection is not the word. A dying man would get up to taste that salad. Let that salad be the touchstone of all French cooks. Let it be the first question to aspirants, "Do you know how to construct ('make' is a word degrading to the grand science)—do you know, monsieur, how to construct the *Salade des Hesperides*?" If the wretch says "No," look down again on your blotting-paper, bow, and glance at the door. As the Count de M. once said to Talleyrand of a candidate for a secretaryship:

"I have no great opinion of this man's mind; he has never eaten pudding à la Riche-lieu, and he does not know the cutlet à la Soubise."

As Brillat Saverin says, profoundly, "It is chiefly men of intellect who hold good eating in honour; the herd is not capable of a mental operation, which consists in a long sequence of appreciations and many severe decisions of the judgment."

FOREIGN OFFICE MIDGES.

It is now about fifteen years since we called attention to the very serious evil of the Agency system at the Foreign Office. We pointed out that it really did give rise in practice to very great abuse in the disposal of public offices in that important department. The Agents were the senior clerks in the Foreign Office, and they invariably contrived by some art or mystery known to themselves, to obtain absolute control over the acts of every succeeding minister who was nominally responsible to Parliament. We mentioned the notorious fact that officers employed abroad in the service of the country, were afraid to draw their salaries when due, because it had been ascertained through experience that it was better for a man's professional prospects that he should let his balance accumulate with an Agent who had control over his professional career; and that it was more prudent, all things considered, to borrow money even at the high rates of interest prevailing in foreign countries, than to disturb a balance which might be looked upon without any great effort of imagination, as a deposit to secure promotion. We added, that it was well known that instances had occurred of embezzlement on the part of these Agents; and that, generally, officers who submitted to the loss and hardship entailed on them by this abuse were rewarded

by the highest Foreign Office honours in the gift of the Crown, while those who presumed to breathe a whisper against the system were persecuted without scruple or justice, and were ultimately hustled out of the diplomatic service by means as unfair towards individuals as injurious to our national interests. Finally, we closed this strange account of the doings of these Foreign Office midges which were actually going on in London within five minutes' walk of the House of Commons, by alluding to the enormous gains reaped by a few clerks who insisted upon their right to levy a large arbitrary tax upon the handsome sum voted annually to support the dignity of our embassies abroad.

We were met by a hailstorm of denials. A gentleman in the service, supposed to have written the article in question, was interrogated in defiance of constitutional law and precedent, which grants freedom to all proper expression of thought in this country; and after having been fined, upon various pretences, about five thousand pounds sterling (5000*l.*) was, as stated in the evidence of the Right Hon. Henry Elliot, in a report now before us, coolly shelved. During the fifteen years which have since elapsed, the Agents, five in number, have reigned supreme over the foreign relations of Great Britain, taking toll, without let or hindrance, from six hundred and ten thousand pounds (610,000*l.*) yearly, of public money, beside the large profits which they must derive from bankers' interest on deposits. Moreover, it appears by a list now published for the use of Parliament, that one of these Agents, who is controller of public accounts and financial business at home and abroad connected with the Foreign Office, enjoys the further additional salary of twelve hundred and fifty pounds (1250*l.*) a year, exclusive of fees on the issue of all commissions; while the other four gentlemen, who are each senior clerks of departments, divide six thousand nine hundred and ninety-three pounds (6993*l.*) a year among them.

A few weeks ago, we referred again to this singular abuse, and in consequence of the great dissatisfaction expressed on all sides with reference to the indisputable facts contained in our disclosures, Mr. Potter, one of the members for Rochdale, moved for some returns. At first there was the usual determined effort of the parties interested, to evade inquiry. They did not hesitate to insult the House of Commons by presenting the shortest paper ever printed for the information of a national assembly. It contained five names, set forth in the middle of a very large sheet of paper of the usual official form, and not one word beside. Of course, when Parliament re-assembled, this immediately provoked another motion; after a short discussion, tending to make the desired returns as incomplete as possible, they were granted, and a "Statement respecting Foreign Office Agencies" was presented to both Houses of Parliament. To

this, has been added a lengthy paper extending over twenty-seven printed folio pages, put forth by the Agents themselves in defence of their profits, and published with curious effrontery at the public expense.

The plea of the Agents is, however, not without a certain importance in the interests of truth, and is valuable as an official confirmation of every fact we have stated on the subject. It contains, moreover, singular proof of the great age that may be attained by a British abuse, however shocking, if it be but defended with sufficient determination and stolidity. We are anxious to give the Agents perfectly fair play—which is all they can expect—and we therefore present their doings once more to our readers in strict accordance with their own account of themselves.

They open their defence by admitting that no fewer than eighty-three years ago the existence of the Agency system in the Foreign Office was recognised as a grave scandal. In 1785, when all sorts of malpractices existed in our public offices, uncensured, the Agencies were thought too bad, even for the lax official morality of that time. Commissioners were appointed to inquire into the suspicious perquisites of the Foreign Office clerks, and it is now recorded that those commissioners expressed an opinion adverse to the whole system. It appears, however, that the practice of rattenning is by no means of recent date, and it was put so actively in force on that occasion that, after a fight of ten years, the subject was suffered to rest without a decision. In 1816 it came forward again, and Lord Castlereagh, who was certainly no strict disciplinarian, found the abuse had become so rampant, that it was necessary to check it by special regulations. It is a bold act on the part of the Agents to plead these restraints as a sanction of their trade, but they do. In 1836 there was again a riot as to the immense emoluments derived from these Agencies, and then it was at last admitted by the parties interested, that the objections urged fifty years before by the commissioners of 1786 were valid and sound, but that they had been removed by the regulations of Lord Castlereagh. This meaningless excuse, being supported by no evidence whatever, failed to satisfy the commissioners appointed to investigate the subject by the reform Parliament; and they reported, as their predecessors had reported half a century before, that "they entertained objections to the Agencies," and they said that, "after the best consideration they were enabled to give, they found that those objections were not removed by the reasons adduced in support of a practice which should, in their opinion, be altogether prohibited."

Of course the customary logic of the Midges was again employed with that invariable success which has long since passed into an official tradition.

A Mr. John Backhouse, then Foreign Under-Secretary, and his colleague, who bore the appropriate name of Strangways, composed a hymn

of praise in defence of the Agents. They declared, in pompous involved periods covering more sheets of foolscap than any one had time to read, that if there were one British institution of which a grateful country might feel prouder than of Magna Charta or the Habeas Corpus, that institution was expressly the Foreign Office Agency system; upon the whole, the Agents were as incorruptible as our judges, and as immaculate as our bishops. Thus this troublesome inquiry was again shelved. But, three years later, in 1840, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir F. Baring, made a personal request to Lord Palmerston to abolish the Agencies. He felt some delicacy in speaking to his colleague in the Cabinet as strongly as the case demanded; and, hence, by an unlucky fatality, selected the Mr. Backhouse above mentioned, for his mouthpiece.

Mr. Backhouse made the most of his opportunity. He drew up an official paper of so Midge-like a character that it is difficult, without severe attention, to elicit any meaning at all from it. But, honestly translated after long study into plain English, it will be found to signify; Firstly, that the Foreign Office is a secret department of the same kind as the Star Chamber, or the old police tribunals of the Austrian and Neapolitan despotisms. Secondly, that no British subject not under the absolute control of this mysterious department had a right to enter there or to make inquiry about anything which was going on, however nearly it might concern himself or his relatives. Thirdly, that if any unprejudiced person not bound to secrecy, were admitted, he would be certain to find out something wrong and report his discovery to the public. Fourthly, that it was inconsistent with the dignity of a hall porter, whose wages were paid out of our taxes, to answer a civil question addressed to him by a taxpayer. Fifthly, that there was no clerk in the Foreign Office who was capable of distinguishing the address on a letter, or who would consent to put it into a bag, without being paid two-and-a-half per cent. upon the income of the person to whom it was addressed. Finally, Mr. Backhouse declared his opinion that British diplomatists should be allowed to smuggle valuable goods into foreign countries, if the fraud were managed under the Queen's seal through a Foreign Office agent; but that this shameful formality was indispensable. The arguments of Mr. Backhouse had the usual effect, and he was so unreasonable and so persistent, that Sir F. Baring and the Lords of the Treasury at length grew weary of the subject and returned no answer to his last letter. Silenced and bored, however, as every successive government had then been for sixty-four years by the dogged opposition of these unruly Midges, no one was ever convinced that the Agencies were anything but a bad business; so once more, in 1850, another commission was appointed to investigate the long-lived grievance. The Midges had grown more insolent with continual impunity, and they handled their weapons so successfully that the com-

mision made no report. Subsequently, Lord Clarendon and Lord Malmesbury expressed a strong wish to abolish the illicit gains of the Agents, as a disgrace to one of the principal departments of State. Mr. Layard has publicly declared them to be a "cheating abomination." Lord Stanley in his turn is now trying to suppress them. But the Agents are still as fresh as ever in defence of their pockets.

Mr. Edmund Hammond is at present Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, and a worthy successor of the eminent Backhouse. Mr. Hammond feels bound both by tradition and usage to defend his fellow-clerks, and thus he speaks:

"The Agency system is old. Three Secretaries of State approved it in 1795. It is optional. It is not obligatory. It is quite a voluntary thing; quite. It is perfectly optional. There is no occasion to employ an Agent. It is a voluntary arrangement. Quite so. Yes. Doubtless everybody is satisfied with it. Nobody complains. It is a perfectly voluntary arrangement. Entirely voluntary. Certainly. There is no objection to it. Friendship is best when bought at two-and-a-half per cent. on the purchaser's income. Agencies are convenient gossip shops. I (Mr. Hammond) should regret their abolition. A gossip shop is a very good thing. A little bought friendship relieves 'the dull routine of official forms.' Gossip shops must give up business if the Agencies are abolished. The sale of friendship is beneficial to the public service—a beneficial arrangement for the clerks. It would be a great disadvantage to the office to abolish Agencies. The sale of 'friendly personal relations' has the greatest possible advantage. I (the Under-Secretary, successor to Mr. Backhouse), 'cannot speak too strongly upon that point.' The public complaints that upon an average it takes the Foreign Office twelve months to answer a letter, and that we are now involved in a costly war because a royal communication was not answered at all, have nothing to do with the Agencies. No Foreign Office clerk is ever idle, or has ever neglected his duty, or has ever done anything wrong whatever. No Agent ever tries to increase his own income by promoting the interests of his clients. Agents and angels are synonymous terms. No such thing as an abuse has ever been heard of." This is the evidence of Mr. Hammond, and it was the evidence of Mr. Backhouse before him, and also the evidence of our worthy friend Mr. Strangways.

Yet there are some queer discrepancies in Mr. Hammond's evidence. He tells us over and over again (and his reiterated answers are reprinted to the great waste of public money), that the Agents never abused their position; yet in reply to question two hundred and eighty-nine of the Select Committee of 1853, he admits that a few years ago two clerks who had not rendered accounts to their clients for several years, embezzled above fifteen hundred pounds sterling, and that when at last the poor officers whom they had defrauded, summoned courage to

complain, the two clerks would give no explanation of this robbery, and were dismissed in consequence. Mr. Hammond says that no Agent has any power of patronage; but he immediately afterwards explains that whenever there is likely to be a vacancy, an Agent may come to him and say, "Such and such a client of mine is a good man. And," adds Mr. Hammond, naively, "I might say that to the Secretary of State."

We are again assured that the employment of an Agent is voluntary, but Mr. Elliot says distinctly: "I have heard that there was one person who had not got an Agent at the Foreign Office; but I know of none now in the diplomatic service." This solitary exception was the officer alleged to have written the exposure in *Household Words*. But how can a system be called voluntary, when it is kept up by the imposition of fines and professional ruin, inflicted upon every officer who does not subscribe to it? Mr. R. A. Earle, another witness examined, states that he has heard complaints of delay in the payment of salaries. Mr. Earle thinks that while Agency is nominally charged at the rate of one per cent., no Agent condescends to receive less than five pounds a year from any customer, though no diplomatic salary granted to any officer under the rank of Secretary of Legation, reaches five hundred per annum, and many consular salaries are below one hundred.

Mr. Sidney Locoek, son of the eminent physician, says that Agents are generally understood to have influence in forwarding the interests of their clients, and that it would be difficult to effect so simple a thing as a change of post, without their interference; and he thinks that if he did not employ an Agent, his chances of promotion would be damaged, unless the whole system were swept away.

The Honourable Julian Fane states that the system of Agencies is an anomalous proceeding altogether. There may be persons in the diplomatic service who do not think they get an equivalent for their money. He has never been able to discover what percentage he pays to his Agent. He has often tried to ascertain what proportion it was of his salary, but has never been able to do so. Mr. Consul Featherstonhaugh employed Mr. James Murray as Agent. Had the highest opinion of him. Should have been embarrassed if he had not had Mr. Murray, who is an honourable and useful man. But whereas Mr. Earle states the Agency fee to be five pounds, it appears by the evidence of Consul Featherstonhaugh that this honourable and useful man took ten guineas.

This is the case upon which the clerks now claim a compensation allowance, only less by one-fifth than the amount of their present receipts! Now, in 1858, when there was no compensation in question, and when it was thought advisable to divert public attention from the large amount of these gains, the select committee were repeatedly informed that the Agency fees were under eighteen hundred a year. And in answer to question two hundred and ninety, Mr. Hammond distinctly explains, in correction

of a former statement, that they amounted on an average of three years, to the precise sum of seventeen hundred and ninety-eight pounds per annum. How is it, then, that the agents now claim compensation on four thousand one hundred and ninety-seven pounds per annum?

Surely it cannot be alleged that an abuse which has been nearly one hundred years under discussion, is abolished without sufficient warning. Again, if the system be voluntary, the loss for which the Agents claim recompense may be purely imaginary, as they could never have had any guarantee for the continuance of chance custom which might have been withdrawn at any time. If they have any right to compensation on the abolition of Agencies, they would have had an equal right to be paid an equivalent out of the public taxation for the loss of a single customer. It may be a subject of inquiry whether these prosperous gentlemen, who have enjoyed princely incomes so long for doing nothing, have ever asked themselves where the compensation they expect is to come from, and by whom their exorbitant demand is to be paid. It would be a hazardous process for one of them to stop a respectable working man going to his labour on a raw winter's morning, with a scanty dinner tied up in his pocket-handkerchief, and say to him: "I am a Foreign Office agent. I have for many years received large fees for doing nothing; I have still an income of twelve hundred and fifty pounds (1250*l.*) a year, besides other large fees, for attending to a light and agreeable business during a nominal period of six hours a day. But, as I have been deprived of a part of my income which I am well aware I ought never to have received, I claim to be indemnified by a slice of your family loaf or a pair of your children's shoes, and I will take them, and no denial."

This is a plain statement of the case of these Agents; these are their arguments and their demands recorded literally in their own language, translated out of the Midge or official jargon into English; and there is very little doubt that, unless the case be promptly handled by some competent and resolute member of the House of Commons, the Midges will carry their point as they always have done, and a hundred years hence they may set public opinion at defiance as they set it at defiance one hundred years ago.

NOTABLE IRISH ASSIZES.

THE Clonmel assizes opened in the spring of 1828, with the usual ceremonies. Till half a century before, the Irish Bar, when on circuit, travelled on horseback. The crown prosecutor, rejoicing in a good jailful; the leading chiefs, their saddle-bags brimming with record briefs; the gay and sanguine juniors, reckless and light-hearted, came riding into the town the day before the assizes, in as close order as a regiment of cavalry, holsters in front of their saddles, overcoats strapped in tight rolls behind, mounted servants following with saddle-bags

full of black gowns and law-books, barefooted sutlers tramping behind with stores of wine and groceries. A mile or so from the town, the gentlemen of the grand jury came riding out to vociferously welcome the new-comers. But in '28 the barristers stole down in the mail one by one, and the picturesqueness of the old entry had all disappeared.

The principal trial of the assize of 1828 was that of the assassins of Daniel Mara, a man who had been condemned to death by the secret societies that were then, and still are, the curse of Ireland, for having brought to justice the murderer of a land-agent named Chadwick. The details of this first crime must be given before the trial of Mara's assassins can be thoroughly understood.

Mr. Chadwick was the collector of rents or steward for an influential family who had property near the old abbey of Holy Cross. He was not peculiarly hard or rigorous with the smaller holders, nor was he a bad-hearted man; but he was overbearing and contemptuous to the peasantry, and used to tell them boastfully that he "fattened upon their curses." The country-people, while brooding over their hatred for this man, used to craftily reply on such occasions, that "his honour was mighty pleasant; and sure his honour, God bless him, was always fond of his joke." The poor oppressed people had acquired the Indian's craft and the Indian's unrelenting thirst for revenge. At last Chadwick, who feared nothing, carried his repressions to too daring a pitch. He began building a police-barrack at Rath Common, that was to be a sort of outlying fort to repress the insolence and turbulence of the disaffected people. The secret tribunal of the Tipperary village then resolved that he should die. A reckless, handsome lad, named Patrick Grace, offered himself as the executioner, and was accepted. Relying on the universal sympathy, the lad came to Rath Common, in open day, on the public road, and close to the barrack, where passengers were perpetually passing, he shot Mr. Chadwick dead, and left him weltering in his blood. This murder spread dismay and horror throughout Ireland, showing as it did the daring ferocity of the secret tribunals and the sympathy shown their agents by the great mass of the peasantry. All this time Grace remained bold and careless, conscious of the sure secrecy and power of the confederacy to which he belonged, and whose murderous work he had done. But he miscalculated, for a worthy man, named Mara, who saw the shot fired, and who stood near Chadwick at the time, gave immediate information, and Grace was at once arrested and tried at the Clonmel summer assizes of 1827. Grace behaved in a fearless way at his trial, and when he was sentenced to death declared that before a year had gone by he should have vengeance in the grave. His kinsmen had, no doubt, promised him that miserable satisfaction. The gibbet for Grace was erected close to the abbey of Holy Cross, and near the scene of the murder. Patrick was escorted to the last scene of his short life by a

body of troops, and fifteen thousand awe-struck people assembled round the scaffold. To the surprise and disappointment of the peasantry, their martyr, though showing no fear of death, expressed himself contrite, and implored the spectators to take warning by his example. While the body of the poor lad still swung in the air, his gloves were handed by one of his relations as a keepsake to an old man, a friend of Patrick's, named John Russell, who, drawing them on, swore at the same time that he would never take them off "till Paddy Grace was revenged."

Philip Mara, knowing his life would certainly be taken, was sent out of Tipperary by the government; but the peasantry, true Arabs in revenge, then resolved to exterminate his kindred. His three brothers, all masons working at the new barrack, were doomed to death. The whole peasantry of Rath Common joined in the cruel league. No man, woman, or child who looked them in the face for weeks, but knew that they were shortly to be killed. On the 1st of October, 1827, the three brothers struck work about five o'clock, and descended from the scaffold to return homeward. Suddenly eight men rushed upon them, and fired a volley. The guns were old, and the volley did not take effect. Two of the brothers and an apprentice escaped in different directions, but Daniel Mara, the third brother, lost his presence of mind, and ran for shelter into the house of a poor widow. He was hotly pursued. One murderer got in after him through a small window; the seven others burst open the door, and savagely put him to a cruel death. This crime caused a greater sensation than even the death of Chadwick, and struck a deep terror through the length and breadth of Ireland. The government instantly offered a reward of two thousand pounds for the assassins; but of the hundreds of accomplices none would betray the eight murderers.

At last, through the personal exertions on the spot of Mr. Doherty, the solicitor-general, a highway robber named Fitzgerald, who was cast for death in the Clonmel jail, offered to furnish evidence to government if his own life was saved. Two men, named Patrick Lacy and John Walsh, were at once arrested, and on the 31st of March, 1828, tried at the Clonmel assizes for the murder of Daniel Mara.

The trial excited tremendous interest. Half the gentry of Tipperary thronged the court. A great crowd of peasantry gathered round the dock, and among them were dispersed a number of policemen, whose dark-green uniforms, high shakos, and keen glittering bayonets contrasted with the ragged grey frieze coats and cudgels of the country people. The governor of the jail stood on the witness-table, conspicuous with his ponderous keys. Mr. Justice Moor, in his red robes lined with black, looked grave as Rhadamanthus; and beside him sat the Earl of Kingston, whose dark and massive countenance and wild shaggy hair made him as conspicuous as the judge himself.

The prisoners, careless of the evidence of a mere "stag" or informer, always regarded by

juries with suspicion, remained firm and composed. Lacy was a tall handsome young man, with a good colour and a clear calm eye. He was dressed with extreme care, his white hands were loosely bound together. Walsh, a far more harmless man, was a sturdy, square-built fellow, with firm and rather a fierce look. The prisoners seemed to entertain little apprehension till Mr. Doherty suddenly rose, turned to the dock, shook his lifted hand, and called "Kate Costello."

This woman was the witness on whose reluctant evidence the whole case for the prosecution turned. The case up to her appearance stood thus: Fitzgerald and Lacy had been sent for from a distance by Paddy Grace's relatives to do "the job." The band was formed, and the ambuscade laid; but something defeating their plans, the murder was adjourned for another week. On Sunday, the 30th of September, another band of assassins was collected, and they met at the house of a farmer, named John Keogh, living near the barrack on which the Maras were at work; here they were waited on by Keogh's poor relation and servant, Kate Costello. On the morning of Monday, the 10th of October, the conspirators proceeded to a wooded hill, called "the grove," above the barracks, where their fire-arms had been hidden. There fresh men joined them, and Kate Costello brought them food and whisky. They remained hiding there till five o'clock, when it was announced that the Maras were coming down from the scaffolding and going home. The men then came down from the grove and murdered Daniel Mara, as we have seen. With their hands still red with an innocent man's blood, these ruffians went to the house of a respectable, orderly farmer, named John Russell. He gave the red-handed men welcome, and placed food before them. Mary Russell, his daughter, a delicate gentle girl, rushed up to them as they entered, and exclaimed with earnestness:

"Did you do any good?"

Peg Russell, an old crone, moping by the fireside, also roused herself, raised her shrivelled yellow hand, and cried with bitter querulousness:

"You might as well not have killed any, since you did not kill them all."

The first witness that leaped on the table was Fitzgerald, the robber, a fine athletic young man of about three-and-twenty. His black eyes were full of fire, and wore a watchful expression; his broad chest was almost bare; his muscular legs were bare about the knee. He proved a most methodical and exact witness, detailing his actions for a whole month with great accuracy. This man had been in the habit of robbing by night the very peasants, whose outrages he at other times put himself forward to redress. He entered farm-houses armed, and demanded board and lodging. By day he would often compel passing travellers to kneel down to him while he presented a musket at their heads. Yet with all this he was chivalrous in many things, and was a favourite with the peasantry. He was especially anxious

to assure the spectators that he had not sold the cause for gold, but simply to save his own neck.

When Fitzgerald had finished, there was a great anxiety in the court about the appearance of Kate Costello. The friends of the prisoners began to believe "that she would never turn against her people;" but suddenly the door of the witness-room opened, and a little withered woman entered, and tottered to the table. Her hands were white and clammy; her eyes closed; her long black hair was dishevelled; and her head drooped on her shoulder. Her voice was an almost inarticulate whisper, and she almost swooned and could not be recovered till she was sprinkled with water. The rod used to identify prisoners was then put into her hands, and she was desired to turn to the dock, and to point out the murderers she had seen in the grove.

Walsh, one of the prisoners, instantly cried out: "O God, you're going to murder me entirely. I'll not stand here to be murdered, for I'm downright murdered. God help me!"

Walsh then, growing somewhat calmer, begged the judge to allow other prisoners to be put with him and Lacy in the dock, in order to test the witness more severely. The judge instantly acquiesced in this demand. The jail being at some distance, some time was lost in this delay, and during this time Kate Costello sank back in her chair apparently almost lifeless.

It was about four o'clock in the morning, and the candles were burning low in their sockets, when the band of prisoners entered the court, astonished and alarmed at the sudden summons. The only sound was the clank of the fetters and the grounding of the soldiers' brass bound muskets on the pavement. Again Kate Costello rose with the fatal index-rod in her hand. The face of Walsh was wrung with the intensest anxiety, and some women among the spectators exclaimed: "Oh Kate!"—a passionate adjuration that seemed to thrill her to the heart. It was not Walsh or Lacy that she cared for, but her own kinsmen, who were also accomplices, and shortly to be tried. She herself had been threatened with death unless she disclosed the truth. If she did disclose it, her life was also in peril. Terrible alternative! At last she advanced towards the dock, raised the trembling rod a second time, and laid it on the head of Walsh. To him it was the touch of death, and he showed that he felt he was lost. As she sank back in her chair, and dropped the rod, a deep murmur of horror and pity ran through the crowd, mingled with curses and stifled execrations from those in the background.

Walsh, who, while there was hope, had been convulsed with agitation, now became calm and composed as his landlord came forward and gave him a high character for integrity and good conduct. Both prisoners were at once found guilty.

Kate's relations, Patrick and John Keogh, were tried a few days after the execution of Lacy and Walsh. It was rumoured that John

had been Kate's lover, and that, though he had deserted her, she would not take his life away or betray "her people." The Keoghs had been the chief planners and actors in the murder of Mara, with whom they had been intimate. They were dressed like respectable farmers. Patrick, the younger, wore a blue coat and white waistcoat, and a spotted black silk handkerchief round his neck; he was short and athletic, and had a determined expression of face. John, the elder, was a man of towering stature and broad shoulders. He was carelessly dressed, and his neck was bare. His blue eyes were mild and intelligent. The old grey-headed father of these prisoners sat on their left hand, his eyes glaring, his cheeks blanching, as the fate of the men became more and more certain, but for the whole sixteen hours of the trial he never uttered a word. This time Kate Costello's manner was entirely changed; she had taken the first step, and now she did not falter. She kept her quick shrewd eyes wide open and fixed upon the counsel, and she watched the cross-examination with a keen wary vigilance. She exhibited no compunction, and without apparent regret laid the rod on the heads of her relative and her lover. Early on Sunday morning the verdict of guilty was brought in. The prisoners, the day before blooming with health, were now white as shrouds. The judge told them that, as it was Easter Sunday, he should delay passing sentence.

The two unhappy men cried out, "A long day, a long day, my lord!" and begged that their bodies might be given to their father. As they made this pathetic request, they uttered the funeral wail, and swaying themselves up and down, threw back their heads and struck their breasts with their fingers half closed, in the manner used by Roman Catholics in saying the "Confiteor." Two friends then lifted the old man upon the witness-table so that he could approach the deck. He stretched out his arms towards John Keogh, who, leaning over the iron spikes to him full length, clasped his father long and closely to his bosom. The younger man's courage gave way at this, and the hot tears rained down his face. The judge then left the court, and the two prisoners were removed to the condemned cells. The old man was led home moaning through the stormy night to the miserable cellar where he lodged.

Old John Russell pleaded guilty at the bar, in the hope of saving his sons, lads of fifteen or sixteen. "Let them," he kept saying, "put me on the trap, if they like, but do let them spare the boys." These assizes lasted three weeks, nearly all the cases being connected with agrarian outrages. There was scarcely one example of a murder committed for mere gain.

It was at these same assizes, at which three hundred and eighty persons were tried, that one of the murderers of the Sheas was tried. This outrage was one of the most inhuman that ever took place in Ireland, and is still talked of in Tipperary with peculiar horror. The crime dated back to the year 1821. In November of

that year, a respectable farmer, named Patrick Shea, who had lately turned out of his farm an under-tenant, named William Gorman, came to live in the house left vacant by the eviction. It was situated in a dark gloomy glen, at the foot of the misty and bleak mountain of Slieve-namawn, and, on a clear day, it was just visible from the high road through the narrow defile of Glenbowser.

On Saturday, the 18th of November, a man of evil character, named William Maher, came to a low shibbeen near the mountain, kept by a man and woman named Kelly, of infamous character. These people sold spirits without a licence, and their house was a well-known resort of bad characters of both sexes. Maher, who was the paramour of Kelly's wife, retired to a recess in the house (probably that used for secret distilling), and melting some lead, ran it into musket bullets. The woman, having heard the "boys" were going to inflict summary justice on the Sheas, for being so harsh to Gorman, whom they had driven out penniless, and without covert or shelter, and being sure Maher would be in the business, taxed him with it, and, having some good instincts left, besought him not to take away life. Maher answered with equivocations. The bullets were scarcely finished before a newly married servant of the Sheas, Catherine Mullaly, a cousin of Mary Kelly, came in. Maher, who knew Catherine, began bantering her in the Irish way, and the girl joined heart and soul in the repartees. Maher's aim was to discover if the Sheas' house, which was well garrisoned, contained any store of fire-arms.

The girl, pleased with his attentions, gradually disclosed to Maher the fact that the Sheas had a great many muskets and pistols, and when she left Maher put on her cloak for her, and bade her farewell as a friend. Mary Kelly, who knew the wretch better, the moment the door closed on Catherine, implored Maher whatever was done, not to harm that poor girl. He promised, and soon after quitted the house with the bullets, leaving Mary Kelly confident of the safety of Catherine. But, nevertheless, the next day her fears revived when she heard Maher and some mysterious whispering men, who dropped into the shibbeen that day after mass talking under breath.

Mary knew that "a word would have been as much as her life was worth," so she did not speak of it even to her husband; but on the Monday night, when he was asleep, stole out of bed, slipped on his coat, and made her way cautiously and slowly under the loose stone walls and hedges to the vicinity of Maher's house. She stopped, for she could hear voices. At length the door opened, and she hid herself behind some brambles as the murderers came out. They passed her, armed and in file; eight faces and eight voices she recognised. One of the eight carried two long lighted sods of turf which he kept alive by his breath. They did not see her, and passed on. Trembling and terror-stricken, but still magnetically drawn, she followed them from hedge to hedge, till they out-

stripped her on the path to the Sheas' house. From where she stood the farmhouse was visible. As she looked, a fire leaped out of the roof, ran over the thatch, and instantly rose into a pyramid of flame, for the wind was high that night; the whole glen grew crimson. The door was barricaded by the murderers. Not one of the Sheas escaped. Shrieks and cries for mercy rose from the seventeen burning wretches within. The conspirators yelled with laughter, whooped for joy, and discharged guns and blunderbusses to celebrate and announce their triumph. Then came a silence, and after that, when the wind abated for a moment, Mary Kelly could hear the deep groans of the dying, and low moans of agony, as the fire spread fiercer to complete its horrible task. At every fresh groan the monsters discharged their guns in fiendish jubilee.

A friend of the Sheas, named Phillip Hill, who lived on the opposite side of the hill adjoining the house, heard the guns echoing in Slievenamawn, and, arousing his friends, made across, if possible, to save the Sheas. These men arrived too late; nor did they dare to attack the murderers, who drew up at once to meet them. Phillip Hill defied them to come on, but they declined his challenge, and waited the attack of the inferior number. All this while the groans from the burning house were growing fainter and fainter till at last they entirely subsided.

John Butler, a boy who had a brother in the Sheas' house, had accompanied Hill, and, eager to discover the murderers, approached nearer than the rest to the fire, and by its light recognised William Gorman. The murderers returned by the same way as they came, and were again observed by Mary Kelly from her hiding-place. The wretches as they passed her were rejoicing over their success, and William Gorman, with detestable and almost incredible inhumanity, was actually amusing the party by mimicking the groans of the dying, and mocking the agonies he and his comrades had inflicted.

The morning beginning to break, Mary Kelly, haggard and affrighted, returned home with her terrible secret; but she did not breathe a word either to her husband or her son, and the next day, when taken before a magistrate, denied all knowledge of the crime.

John Butler also went back to the house of his mother—an old woman—and, waking her, told her that her son had been burnt alive with all in the Sheas' house. The old woman uttered a wail of grief, but, instead of immediately proceeding to a magistrate, she enjoined her son not to ever disclose the secret, lest she and all their family should meet the same fate.

The next day, all that side the county gathered round the ruins. Mary Kelly was among them, and no doubt many of the murderers. The sight was a fearful one, even to those innocent of the crime. Of the roof only the charred rafters were left; the walls were gaping apart; the door was burned to its hinges, close by it lay sixteen corpses, piled together: those who were uppermost were burned to the very bones; those below were only partially consumed. The

melted flesh had run from the carcases in black streams along the scorched floor. The first thought of all had been to run to the door.

Poor Catherine Mullaly's fate was the most horrible and most touching of all. In the midst of the flames she had been prematurely delivered of a child—that unhappy child, born only to instantly perish, was the eighteenth victim. In trying to save her child, she had placed it in a tub of water, where it was found, with the head burned away, but the body perfect. Near the tub lay the blackened body of the mother, her skeleton arm hanging over the water. The spectators beheld the sight with dismay, but they were afraid to speak. Some one whispered, sternly, "William Gorman is well revenged!" Many at first tried to argue that the fire had been an accidental one, as no Ribbonmen would, they said, have ever destroyed so many innocent people merely because they worked for the Sheas. This opinion gained ground among persons jealous of the national character, especially when no one came forward to obtain the large reward. At last, however, it was discovered that not only was the conflagration the result of an extensive plot, but that the whole population round Slievenamawn knew of the project and its execution.

For sixteen months Mary Kelly kept the secret. She did not dare to reproach Maher, who constantly visited her house, and yet she shuddered at his approach. Gradually her mind began to yield to the pressure. She became incapable of sleep, and used, in the dead of the night, to rise and wander over the glen, remaining by the black ruins of the Sheas' house till morning, and then returning, worn and weary, to her home. She believed herself pursued by the spectre of her unhappy kinswoman, and said, on the private examination before the trial, that she never lay down in her bed without thinking of the "burning," and fancying she saw Catherine Mullaly lying beside her holding her child, "as black as a coal," in her arms. At length conscience grew stronger and drove away fear. She revealed her secret in confession, and the priest, like a good and honest man, prevailed upon her to give instant information to Captain Despard, a justice of peace for the county of Tipperary.

It was not till 1827 that William Gorman was apprehended and put upon his trial. There is no doubt that Shea, the middleman, had been cruel and oppressive to Gorman, his under-tenant. He had retaliated upon him the severities of the superior landlord. Gorman had been distrained, sued in the superior courts, processed by civil bill, totally deprived of his farm, house, and garden, and then driven out, a disgraced beggar, to brood over vengeance.

A keen observer (we believe, the son of the celebrated Curran), who was present at this remarkable trial, has left a terrible picture of Gorman's appearance and manner as he stood at the Clonmel dock. "He was evidently," he says, "most anxious for the preservation of his life; yet the expression of anxiety which disturbed his ghastly features occasionally gave

way to the exulting consciousness of his revenge. As he heard the narration of his own delinquencies, so far from exhibiting contrition or remorse, a savage joy flashed over his face; his eyes were lighted up with a fire as lurid as that he had kindled in the habitation of his enemies; his hand, which had previously quivered and manifested, in the peculiar movement of his fingers, the workings of deep anxiety, became for a moment clenched; and when the groans of his victims were described, his white teeth, which were unusually prominent, were bared to the gums; and though he had drained the cup of vengeance to the dregs, still he seemed to smack his lips and to lick the blood with which his injuries had been redressed."

Immediately after the conviction and execution of this monster, a large meeting of Roman Catholics was held at Clonmel to express horror at his crime, and to consider some means of removing the causes of such outrages. Mr. Sheil's speech to the peasantry produced an enormous sensation. "How deep a stain," he said, eloquently, "have these misdeeds left upon the character of your country! and what effort should not be made by every man of ordinary humanity to arrest the progress of villainy which is rolling in a torrent of blood, and bearing down all the restraints of law and morality. Look, for example, at the murder of the Sheas, and tell me if there be anything in the records of horror by which that accursed deed has been excelled, and say, you who know it best, you who are of the same sex as Catherine Mul-laby, what must have been the throes with which she brought forth her unfortunate offspring, and felt her infant consumed by the fire with which she was surrounded. We can but lift up our hands to the God of justice and ask Him why He has invested us with the same forms as the demons who perpetrated that unexampled murder! And why did they commit it? By virtue of a horrible league by which they were associated together, not only against their enemy, but against human nature and the God who made it; for they were bound together, they were sworn in the name of their Creator, and they invoked Heaven to sanctify a deed which they confederated to perpetrate by a sacrament of hell."

At these same assizes, which seemed to epitomise almost all the crimes and miseries of poor Ireland, there were two other cases which still after so many years are often referred to in Tipperary. The first of these trials was that of a band of men who entered the house of a farmer named Barry, and killed him in his wife's arms. Barry had refused to surrender some land from which he had evicted one of the conspirators, and the league had agreed to take his life. The assassins broke into his house on the Sunday evening. The frantic wife, grasping one of the murderers, desired him to think "of God, and of the blessed night, and to spare

the father of her eight children." The man himself offered to give up the disputed ground, tilled or untilled. They answered, with yells of ferocious irony, that "he should soon have ground enough," and plunged their bayonets simultaneously into his heart. Among the prisoners at the dock was a young stripling with the down still on his cheek, and a wild, haggard old man with a head covered with hoary and dishevelled hair.

The second trial was that of Matthew Hogan and three of his kinsmen, for the murder of one or two of the Hickeys, members of a rival clan. The Tipperary people at that time were too fond of taking the law into their own hands. If a man received a blow, he instantly lodged a complaint with his clan, who at once, over their egg-shells of whisky, entered into a solemn compact the next fair-day to avenge the insult. The other side spent the time in industriously forming a reactionary confederacy. The next fair-day, before the booths were well up, a Hogan would suddenly strike a Hickey, or a pot-valiant Hickey go trailing his coat defiantly and insultingly among the Hogans. Then up would go the blackthorns, and in two minutes the whole fair would be a whirl of battering sticks, and the air be dark with "two-year-olds," as clinkers and small square paving-stones are affectionately denominated in Ireland; the screaming women come also from under the low tents, with stones in stockings, ready to give a coup de grace to any man of the opposite side who fell, or to step behind a redoubtable champion, perhaps at bay with his back against a wall, and fell him with a sudden side stroke.

In the particular case we cite there were five hundred men engaged, and several of the Hickey party were left dead on the field. Matthew Hogan, whose fate excited strong sympathy, is described as a tall athletic man, with a finely formed face totally free from any ferocity of expression. His landlord, who had a great regard for him, deposed to his being an honest, industrious farmer, of a mild and kindly nature. He had never taken part in any deeds of nocturnal crime, and was known as a gentle and humane person, and liked by every one with whom he came in contact.

He and his three kinsmen were all sentenced to transportation. When the sentence was passed, the colour fled from Hogan's cheeks, his lips became dry and ashy, his hands shook; but no tears rose into his eyes. His grief was too great for tears. As one of his own clan said: "Hogan will feel it the more because he is so tinder."

He was a prosperous farmer, with a young wife and beautiful children. It was even proved that he had generously stayed his hand to save the life of an antagonist in the very hottest fury of the combat. But there was no respite for him. He was transported in spite of every effort of his friends.

Unhappy lawlessness of an unhappy age!

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LIFE
ASSURANCES,

WITH
PARTICIPATION
FROM
1st of JANUARY, 1868,

ENTITLED TO
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NEARLY
£800,000

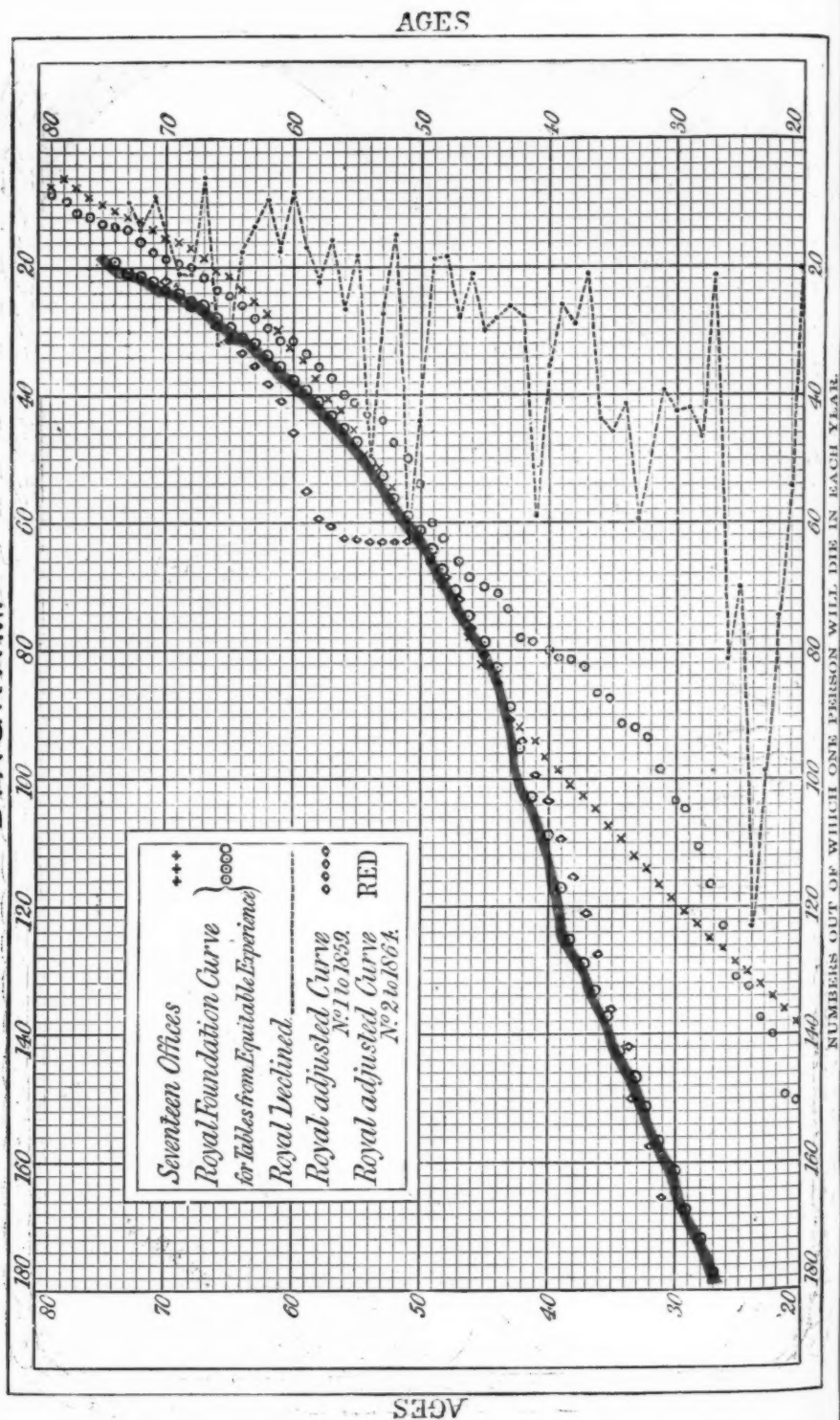
£200,000

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DIAGRAM.



The favourable Mortality experienced by the ROYAL, is exhibited by the Diagram, which shows the NUMBER out of which ONE has Died at each Age up to the end of the year 1864, compared with the NUMBER which had been EXPECTED by the Tables, and further contrasted with its Experience up to the end of 1859, and with the "Combined experience of Seventeen Offices."

"I CONFINE myself to the experience of the seventeen Offices published in 1843. A few words will suffice to show the *particular and general* adaptation of this figure to its intended purpose.

To exhibit the first of these qualities, let it be supposed that the enquirer wishes to compare the Mortality experienced by the respective Offices named, on Lives aged 40 years.

By drawing his finger carefully along the horizontal line 40, to the points where the several curves cross the said line, and following with his eye the vertical line at those respective points to the top or bottom of the page, he will learn that

The "ROYAL" expected that 1 out of about 80 would die:

But by adjusted experience to 1855, only 1 out of about 109 would die;

And by ditto to 1859 1 " " 104 would die;

Whilst by the combined experience . . 1 " " 97 would die.

Little will be required to show the *general* adaptation of the Diagram to exhibit the *success of the ROYAL in its Mortality*, and the BENEFIT THUS OBTAINED BY THE ASSURER WITH PARTICIPATION OF PROFITS in that Office. I refer here to the fact that every point on the left of the $\odot\odot\odot$ curve, which it must be observed represents the Mortality *expected* by our Tables, shows more or less gain according as it is removed from or approaches thereto. Now, as the curve $\odot\odot\odot$ and the one painted red, respectively depicting the adjusted Mortality of the ROYAL up to 1859, and up to 1864, are *entirely on the left of the $\odot\odot\odot$ curve*, and some portions of them *at a very marked distance*, it is at once evident that everything in the *PAST* experience of the Company, as respects this important subject, has been *more favourable than could have been reasonably hoped for.*"



EVIDENCES OF GREAT PROGRESS.

FIRE PREMIUMS.

1856 £151,733

1866 447,271

1866 NEARLY THREE TIMES THE AMOUNT OF 1856.

LIFE PREMIUMS.

1856 £37,344

1866 188,566

1866 FIVE TIMES THE AMOUNT OF 1856.

RAPID GROWTH OF LIFE FUNDS.

1856 £118,716

1866 848,746

1866 exceeds 1856 by no less than £730,030.

Amount added to the Life Funds in the year 1866 alone, after payment of all Losses and Expenses, £124,165.

The increase for the year 1867 alone, beyond the amount at the close of the year 1866, will also show, when the accounts are completed, a further amount of over £120,000, making the total Life Funds nearly £1,000,000, in addition to the Fire Reserve fund and Capital. The accumulated funds of the Company being thus nearly

ONE MILLION AND A HALF STERLING.

The Actuary in his late Valuation Report stated his opinion that **no less than £100,000** would be added annually to the Life and Annuity Funds, for the next ten years. This anticipation has so far been more than realized, as the Funds in hand at the end of 1867 will show an

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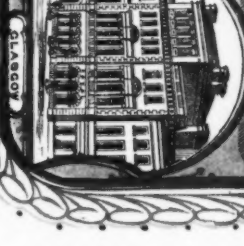
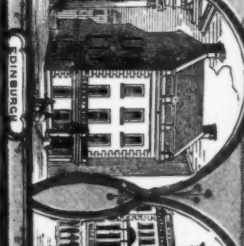
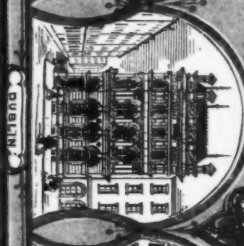
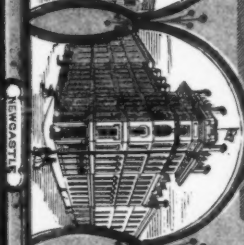
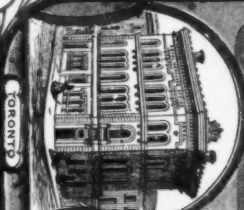
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